

2 dads, 4 babies • Rosie fights for her magazine >

The Advocate

The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine

www.advocate.com | SEPTEMBER 3, 2002

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ISRAELIS
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REFUSE
TO FIGHT

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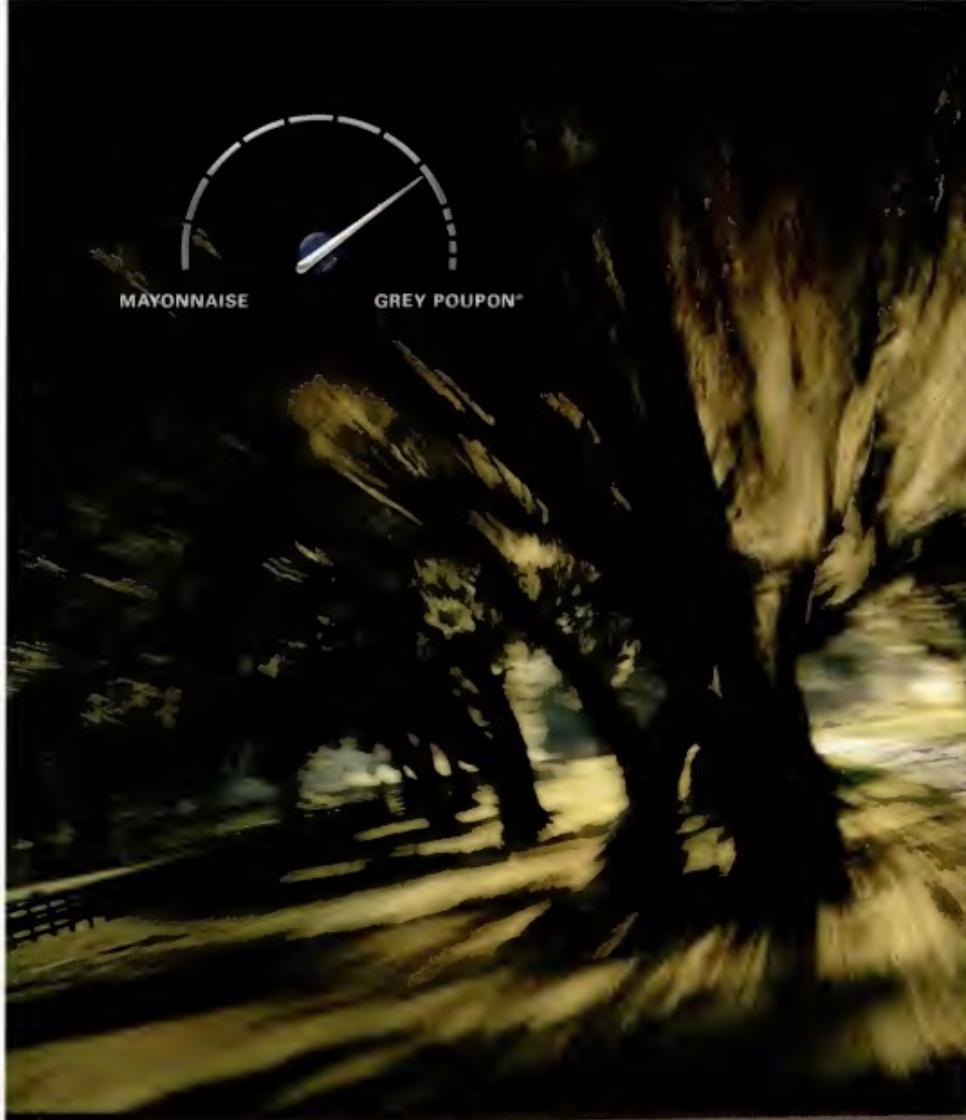
Let the Gay Games begin!

- » Exclusive portraits of 10 U.S. athletes, including **Kurt Gering**
- » Can these games avoid past failures?
- » Why Australia is more gay-friendly than America

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FIRE HIS
AIDS CZAR?

WHO'S
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Broken spirit

Your article "The Dangerous Lives of Gay Priests" (July 23) is a sad statement on the inability of the Catholic Church to deal with human sexuality in a healthy way. Being a gay man and a priest, I have struggled not only with the issue of being part of a profession that alienates and isolates its priests by creating an environment of mistrust but also with the implications my sexual orientation

active ministry. What I have come to realize is that the church hierarchy is indeed very sick and in need of some spiritual healing. Until that happens and until church leadership embraces homosexuality as God-given and holy, the lives of those priests who happen to be gay will continue to be full of secrecy and fear. And who will suffer ultimately as a result of all this? The people whom these good men are called to serve.

Peter Ashurst, Oklahoma City, Okla.

"Until the church embraces homosexuality as God-given, the lives of gay priests will be full of secrecy and fear."

—PETER ASHURST, Oklahoma City, Okla.



might have had for the future of my vocation.

Some four years ago I found myself isolated, alone, and miserable, and my state of being was severely affecting my ability to minister. I had not met anyone—there was no boyfriend on the side, hidden away. I wasn't leading the double life that so many priests find themselves living. Yet I felt more and more that this was not the way God wanted me to live. So I took a leave of absence.

During my two-year leave, I struggled with my place in the church and whether God really wanted me to continue to be a priest. I decided to give priesthood another shot and asked the bishop if I could return to active ministry. And so began an 18-month game where the bishop would have me jump through one hoop after another, promising that I would indeed return to active ministry in one breath, then retracting that with the next breath. The overarching issue that concerned him was the fact that I am gay.

It has been some nine months since I gave up on trying to return to

Your story was a reminder of my past life as a Roman Catholic seminarian and true in all of its points. But *The Advocate* needs to discover, like I did, the existence of another branch of Catholicism: the Old Catholic Church. After discovering it myself and being ordained in it and now a consecrated Catholic archbishop in valid apostolic succession like any Roman Catholic bishop, I have found true joy. I am able to watch over the church as it grows, provide the Catholic sacraments, perform holy unions of gay couples, and preach the good news untainted by human prejudice.

Archbishop Bruce J. Simpson,
via the Internet

I couldn't help feeling both amused and angered by the irony, arrogance, and blatant entitlement of the priests quoted. Whether they lead openly gay celibate lives or, as many confess in the article, engage in "clandestine sex lives," these priests naively express anger, fear, and even surprise at being forced out of the priesthood. Hello? Wake up and

smell the anointing oil! In a country where one cannot be openly gay and serve in the military or even participate in the Boy Scouts, how can these men expect to be accepted and embraced by the very organization that condemns them?

I think church officials should throw gay priests out of the priesthood. Maybe then these men would be inspired to become really useful in our society by trying to put an end to the intolerance and hypocrisy that still exists in the church. And they could do it proudly.

Michael Selditch, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Writer Mubarak Dahir says that sexuality is often what "leads gay men to become priests in the first place." Though I was raised in the Church of Christ and constantly struggled between what is "right" and "wrong," I realized that hiding behind any denomination's beliefs was not going to change the way God created me. Having faith in a higher being is one thing, but using religion as a crutch to deny who we are puts all homosexuals at risk. Thus, the "witch-hunts," as Dahir calls them. Repressing our natural feelings for one another never turns out positively—doesn't anyone remember the movie *American Beauty*?

Russell Ashby, Denton, Tex.

Mubarak Dahir seems to think we should support priests who blow off a vow, particularly a vow that is equitable for gay and straight. Celibacy is indeed a difficult vow—that's why it is a vow. The purpose of celibacy is threefold. First, it focuses the attention of the individual on God. Second, it minimizes earthly distractions (spouse, offspring). Third, celibacy is a distinct lifestyle that designates and tests the celibate. Gay priests disregarding this particular vow fly in the face of these purposes (offspring are not a likely part of the gay priest scene, but dating dramas could certainly make up for that). In no way should any queer with integrity be expected to respect the decision of clergy who disregard their vows of celibacy.

R. Davis, Lakewood, Colo. ▶



A close-up photograph of a man's face, smiling broadly with his mouth open. He is splashing water from his hands onto his face, creating a dynamic spray of droplets. The background is a soft-focus blue, suggesting water or a shower environment.

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- "I think it's a great idea, especially if someone had no family to turn to. That way they could be in a supportive environment."
- "I might choose a gay/lesbian retirement village, but in another, warmer climate, such as California or Arizona. Canadian winters are too hard on a girl's complexion!"
- "I want to retire to a facility that welcomes all types of people."
- "I would add the caveat 'affordable' for such housing. I'm a professional gay man who's worked for nonprofits, which has made for poor retirement prospects."
- "Of course I would have a lot more to talk about with other gays than I would with straight people. It would be hard to relive the good old days with someone who has no idea what I am talking about."
- "Self-imposed isolation is detrimental to the gay community."

It's been a long time since I read a copy of *The Advocate*, and I purchased this issue because of great concern about the sex-abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. I was dismayed by the inaccuracy in the statement "Milwaukee archbishop Rembert Weakland was forced out of his job after a gay adult relationship some 20 years earlier was revealed." In fact, by [church] law Weakland was required to resign his position as archbishop when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 75 earlier in the year. The pope's acceptance of this resignation had at least as much to do, if not more, with the mandatory retirement age as it did the revealed affair.

Name withheld, Fond du Lac, Wis.

Guilty parties

People can't honestly believe that if it weren't for Father Paul Shanley's raping of young men and children, he would have been a pioneer for gay rights ["The Shame of Father Shanley," July 23]. His advocacy was a cover-up for crime. Had he not been a rapist, he wouldn't have needed the cover-up.

Despite knowing about his crimes, the Catholic Church enabled

him to ruin people. Now the church is trying to place blame elsewhere: on gay priests. Church leaders are to blame for providing the only institution that makes it legal for pedophiles to act on their lack of human respect. Anywhere else, a pedophile would be charged with rape, but in the cover of the priesthood, they get reassigned or, at most, lose their collar. At least Shanley is in prison. I find solace in knowing that they will all serve their time in hell.

J. Malachi, Rochester, N.Y.

The judgment of *The Advocate* and writer John Gallagher has been made. Shanley is guilty! Allegations have been made, "victims" have given their stories, no trial, no jury; the media have reveled in their First Amendment rights and convicted a man before he is proved guilty. So much for justice.

J. Tyler Lambert, Philadelphia, Pa.

The marrying kind

Massachusetts candidate for governor Robert Reich should be applauded for his support of full marriage rights for same-sex couples [At Issue, July 23]. However, your statement "It's the furthest a

gubernatorial candidate has ever gone in supporting equal rights for gay couples" is not entirely accurate. In 1998 former New York State transportation commissioner Jim Larocca made LGBT rights a cornerstone of his campaign for governor. Not only did he unequivocally support full marriage rights, he also pledged, if elected, to veto any Defense of Marriage-style legislation passed by the legislature. Contrary to what conventional wisdom might suggest, his leadership on such a progressive issue did not cost him support in conservative areas. Larocca gained more votes at the Democratic Party's rural caucus than all other candidates combined. He ultimately fell short in his quest to become governor more from a lack of money than from being perceived as too liberal.

Doug Sterner, New York, N.Y.

While I appreciate Reich's willingness to support same-sex marriage, he is not the [only] gubernatorial candidate to do so. This year the Minnesota Green Party's candidate for governor, Kent Pental, supports same-sex marriage rights in line with the state and national party platforms of the Greens.

David Strand, Minneapolis, Minn.

Please keep letters brief and to the point; we reserve the right to edit all letters as deemed necessary. Letters must include the home address and phone number of the writer and should be sent to Letters to the Editor, *The Advocate*, P.O. Box 4371, Los Angeles, CA 90078; faxed to (323) 467-9905; or E-mailed to letters@advocate.com. We cannot respond to letters individually. For general information, send an E-mail to info@advocate.com with Info typed in the subject line of your message.

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Shallow understanding

In 1993 I was in my second year of working my way through college as a deputy sheriff in Cobb County, Ga. That summer the Cobb County board of commissioners passed its infamous antigay resolution condemning the "gay lifestyle" as being "incompatible" with the community standards of Cobb County—just as I was starting the process of coming out. I believed my

job and education had been placed in immediate jeopardy, so I retreated back into the closet.

One night we brought in a man on a DUI case—maybe with a rainbow sticker on his car; I don't remember exactly. What stuck in my mind was that he was extremely upset about being arrested in Cobb County: "You're just doing this to me because I'm gay," he kept complaining.

No, we weren't. In fact, I was quietly going well out of my way to make sure that none of my coworkers treated him unfairly. But, fearing for my job, there was no way I could explain that to him. Not that it would have made much difference. As long as I was wearing a uniform with COBB COUNTY on the sleeves, there was no way he could believe me. There was nothing discriminatory about our actions that night, but the county government had sent a message, and that man had received it loud and clear.

The impact of it was real.

Brock Bigsby, the scout executive of the Boston Minuteman Council, is in a similar fix. His is the first Boy Scout council in the United States to publicly announce a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation, in apparent defiance of the Boy Scouts of America's national membership policies. But he still wears the uniform of a national organization whose leaders have consistently sent the message that gay people are immoral, unclean, and unwelcome. The Boston council's

policy has been in place for over a year, but neither I nor the council can point to a single openly gay scout or leader. As far as I know, I was its only openly gay applicant and was turned



down. Out of 21,000 members, I know not one who has come out publicly. They've seen and read too much to trust that the Boston Minuteman Council will be able to keep its word, rightly fearing the ruckus that will inevitably ensue when someone comes out and Boston is put to the test by national headquarters.

I've stayed in touch with some old coworkers at the Cobb County sheriff's office, although I left my job there after I graduated from college, having served as a deputy for more than three years. Now that I'm out, friends there often tell me that sexual

orientation is a total nonissue for them—which is encouraging but still not enough. That resolution has never been rescinded, and those well-meaning people have never taken any active steps to reduce the fear and uncertainty that still keep some of their coworkers in the closet.

Compare that to Boy Scout groups quietly reassuring funders that they disagree with the national policy and would never kick out a teenager because of his religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Why not tell the teenagers themselves?

Back-room reassurances made to the people who aren't directly affected simply won't cut it. Discrimination isn't just about yanking membership cards. It's the message sent as a matter of policy: Some people's lives and liberties are valued less than others. And anything that carries that message—seating in the back of the bus or this convoluted "don't ask, don't tell" crap—has got to go.

I know that many of the people in Boston and elsewhere are trying to do the right thing, and they should be commended for stepping forward when so many others haven't. But I can't bring myself to cut them any slack. The memory of those years I spent perfecting the art of living in the closet is still fresh, and I shudder when I think the same thing may be happening to another generation.

In my hometown of Birmingham, Ala., just a few years before I was born, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from the city jail, "Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection."

Amen, brother. ■

Noel is director of the New England Coalition for Inclusive Scouting.

Now that I'm out, friends in Georgia often tell me that sexual orientation is a total nonissue for them—which is encouraging but still not enough.

I'm ready for my



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"I change my mind so much, I need two boyfriends and a girl. I need an East Coast guy, a West Coast guy, and a girl."

—Pop star Pink "after beer 4," as quoted in the June-July issue of Blender magazine



"[My son] Jack Henry came up to me the other day and said, 'Is it true you played a lesbian vampire?' I thought, *No! Of course... Oh, yes, I did!* 'Yeah, it's true,' I said, and he and his brother went, 'Oh, jeez, Ma!'"

—The Hunger star Susan Sarandon (left, with Jack Henry and younger son Miles), as quoted in the August issue of Interview



"I'm always the last to know."

—Actress Jennifer Coolidge (American Pie, Legally Blonde, Best in Show), commenting on queer as Folk star Robert Gant's having come out onstage minutes earlier at the July 21 awards night of Outfest, the L.A. gay and lesbian film festival. Coolidge said she'd been making eyes at Gant all night



"He [Attorney General John Ashcroft] has grossly underestimated me. I'm not some lesbian lefty."

—Defense attorney Lynne F. Stewart, indicted for conspiring to aid terrorists in connection with a Muslim extremist client, as quoted by the Los Angeles Times, July 27



"It is not progress [to support gay marriage], it is decadence."

—Nigerian cardinal Francis Arinze, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, as quoted by the Canadian Press news service, July 25

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At Issue

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PARENTING

An instant family

A Kentucky gay couple sets out to raise quadruplets, knowing the state recognizes only one of them as the father

Since their three sons and daughter were born in Lexington, Ky., on July 26, partners Thomas Dysarz, 31, and Michael Meehan, 36, have been making daily trips to the hospital to hold the newborns to their chests while feeding them. "It lets the child hear your heartbeat while he's eating," Dysarz said. That way, he added, they know that he's their daddy.

The quadruplets—Jacob, Michael, Tristan, and Taylor—may realize that Dysarz is their father, but legally speaking, only Meehan—their biological father—has the right to call himself "Dad." And even though the babies' surrogate mother has agreed to relinquish her parental rights, Dysarz likely will remain only an unofficial father as long as the family resides in Kentucky, where state law does not provide any legal channel for gay men and lesbians to adopt their partners' children.

Actually, only six states and the District of Columbia have established legal precedent at the appeals court level that explicitly approves so-called second-parent adoptions. Nevertheless, there are steps Dysarz and Meehan and other gay parents should take to protect themselves in case one



Thomas Dysarz (left) and Michael Meehan had quadruplets via a surrogate mother. As the biological father, only Meehan has parental rights.

of them dies or they decide to break up, according to Ruth Harlow, legal director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. "You have to build as much evidence as possible that there was a specific intent that both partners act as coparents," she said.

Lisa Coons-Andersen of the Florida-based group We 2 Have Parental Rights recommends that same-sex parents not only legally document their life as a family with things such as a will but also create records of parental involvement through photos, school documents, or proof of their participation in their children's extracurricular activities. "These may not be legally binding," she acknowledged, "but if you're caught in a dispute over the kids with your ex-partner, they can at least give your lawyer something concrete."

Dysarz, who owns two Lexington hair salons, said Meehan, who is an attorney, "is drawing up all kinds of legal papers for us." In addition, he's "not too worried" about a custody battle should the two break up. "This has made us stronger as a couple," he said, adding that next year they plan to have more children with the same surrogate mother—this time using Dysarz's sperm. —Mubarak Dahir

Rosie O'Donnell on the new direction of *Rosie* | Page 16

The Nation



Supporters and opponents of an antigay ballot initiative crowd the statehouse in Boston.

MARRIAGE

Holding back the homophobes

It took a joint session of the Massachusetts legislature, but on July 17 lawmakers killed a proposed antigay ballot initiative. The initiative's aim would have been to amend the state constitution in order to ban recognition of same-sex marriage.

A crowd of supporters and opponents of the proposal gathered at the statehouse to hear the vote. "We are absolutely thrilled with this defeat of an antigay, antimarriage constitutional amendment," said Holly Gunner of gay rights group MassEquality.org.

COURT

Sodomy takes the stand

Just 11 days after the Arkansas supreme court overturned that state's same-sex sodomy law, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund on July 16 asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the "homosexual conduct" law in Texas. The law prohibits sex between consenting adults of the same sex. The case, *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas*, involves two men who were arrested in 1998 while having sex in the home of one of the men.

"This law harms all people who believe that their homes should be protected from governmental intrusion," said Lambda's Lee Taft. "In particular, it brands lesbian and gay Texans as second-class citizens."

From left: Garner and Lawrence with one of their lawyers



PEOPLE

Rosie fights for Rosie

Known for her battles for gun control and gay adoption,

Rosie O'Donnell may be picking a new fight—for more influence at her magazine, *Rosie*. O'Donnell, who shares ownership of the magazine with publisher Gruner & Jahr USA but does not have editorial control, reportedly is upset about its new direction and, at press time, was threatening legal action. According to *The New York Times*, the former talk-show host is frustrated by new editor Susan Toepfer's effort to make *Rosie* content more uplifting, which doesn't always fit with

O'Donnell's desire to emphasize real-life stories. "There are creative differences, which they are trying to work on and hopefully resolve," O'Donnell representative Cindi Berger told *The Times*.

Meanwhile, O'Donnell said she's done with being featured on the magazine's covers. "Part of the agreement to do this magazine was that I [would] do only one cover a year, and I have been on the last eight or nine covers," she told *Mediaweek*. "That has been a big problem for me—I hate photo shoots. I would rather have a root canal than do a photo shoot."

"I did [the September] cover with *The Sopranos* that's in the can," she added, "and that's it."





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The Nation

AIDS RIDES

End of the road?

Beneficiaries called it quits for yet another AIDS Ride on July 26. This time it was the Heartland AIDS Ride,

which for seven years has raised millions of dollars for charities in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Representa-

tives at the charities cited shrinking proceeds and lower rider turnout when announcing the decision to end their partnership with ride organizer Pallotta TeamWorks. AIDS charities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., also have cut ties with Pallotta in the past year.

Two weeks prior to the Heartland announcement, Pallotta officials said they were also discontinuing their AIDS vaccine fund-raising bike rides after this year. "The returns were not good, and people were not signing up," said company president Steve Bennett.



Pallotta TeamWorks's Heartland AIDS Ride is now defunct.

MURDER

Closure at Gallaudet

Joseph Mesa Jr. will spend the rest of his life in prison for killing two of his former classmates at Gallaudet University—a Washington, D.C., school for the deaf and hard-of-hearing—in September 2000. One of Mesa's victims, 19-year-old Eric Pankett, was a member of the school's gay student group.

"Both victims are on my mind forever," the 22-year-old Mesa said through a sign-language interpreter at the July 10 sentencing. But his apology failed to sway District of Columbia superior court judge Robert Richter, who sentenced Mesa to six life terms in prison. "There is a need for retribution, in a sense, for a case like this," Richter said.

The World

MARRIAGE

The battle over "I do"

Although the superior court in Ontario, Canada, ruled on July 12 that the province must recognize gay marriage, the Canadian government isn't quite ready to let gay people go down the aisle. The feds said July 29 that they would appeal the provincial court's ruling because, as Canada's attorney general, Martin Cauchon, explained, "there is no consensus, either from the courts or among Canadians, on whether or how [the country's marriage] laws require change."

Meanwhile, a court in Germany reinforced that country's same-sex partnership law on July 17. Germany's supreme court dismissed a complaint brought by conservatives that the law violated constitutional provisions protecting marriage.



From left: Canadian attorney general Cauchon; Germany's Beck with a newly joined couple

In effect since August, the partnership law gives legally registered same-sex couples most of the rights given to married couples and re-

quires a court decision for divorce.

"I'm enormously relieved," said openly gay lawmaker Volker Beck after the court's decision.

UNITED KINGDOM

Out in parliament

Alan Duncan has become the first Conservative member of the British parliament to come out of the closet.

Duncan, who is foreign affairs spokesman for Britain's main opposition party, told *The [London] Times* newspaper on July 29 that "living in disguise as a politician in the modern world simply isn't an option."

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Behind the Headlines

"Just one of the girls"

How a 61-year-old transgendered woman got elected student body president of her Pennsylvania community college

By the time Alberta Hamm had enrolled in Pennsylvania's Harrisburg Area Community College two years ago, she had been through several lifetimes: as a husband and father, an elder in her Protestant church, a salesman at a Montgomery Ward department store, and, since 1995, as a transgendered woman (her transition was completed on July 10, 2001).

Hamm was already speaking on behalf of the trans community when she entered HACC to study to become a therapist for gender identity issues. Last spring, Hamm, 61, was elected president of the student government. She spoke to *The Advocate* on the eve of her first semester in office.

You could have stayed low-profile when you first enrolled at HACC, but you decided to be very visible and active. Was that difficult to do? When I started at HACC, I was approached about doing a presentation [on transgender issues]. I was very skittish about it. I thought, *I came to school to get an education, not to put myself out front.* But then I realized, *No, what it's all about is to put myself out front,* therefore preventing, possibly, somebody else from going through the same problems that I had.



Alberta Hamm "lived a double life for 55 years" but now feels "fantastic."

You lived for 55 years as a man. What convinced you to make the full transition?

You might say I lived a double life for 55 years. And [in 1995] it was starting to take its toll. I was married for 30 years and all the time pretended to be something I was not. I was being treated for heart problems. They said to me, "Either you get rid of this stress in your life, or you're going to be dead." The doctors scheduled me for some mental health evaluation. It took me three months of talking with a therapist, and one day I just broke down and told this therapist that I felt like a woman.

What have you found to be recurring misconceptions about transgendered people?

One thing is, "Oh, you just want to have a sex

change so you don't have to admit you're gay." As far as I am concerned, I am a heterosexual woman. Can I reproduce children? No. But I am as close to being a genetic woman as possible. And I'm comfortable with that. Do I hope to get married? Yes, I do. Will that happen? I don't know. I keep saying that my transition became part of my spiritual life. So if the good Lord wants me to have a husband, I think he's going to arrange that.

Was the transition harder or easier than you anticipated?

It was actually much easier. I anticipated losing my job, only to have my employer reinforce what I was doing, saying, "Hey, you're a good salesperson. We want you here. In your transition, you remember that you can always work

for Montgomery Ward, and we just would appreciate it if you didn't embarrass the company."

Well, I was company-oriented, so why would I do that? I started transitioning, and I went very slowly and very conservatively. And I think that's why I was so successful.

What did you think your chances were of getting elected by the students at your school?

I ran against four other people, all probably under 30. You have to understand, I live in a conservative area. I was concerned. Number 1, I was 61 years old. Number 2, I was a trans person. But the students at HACC didn't consider that at all. They just knew I was familiar with student government. I ran on issues of teamwork, diversity, fiscal responsibility, and accountability. I had a good platform, and I knew the issues. But yet I have students who say to me, "We don't care about those other things. We know you as Alberta, and that is what is important." I feel fantastic. I'm old enough to be these students' grandmother, and they accept me. I function just like I'm one of the girls.

What plans are on your agenda for your first semester as president? I want to have a disabilities club on campus. I have a severe vision impairment, and if it weren't for our disability program, I probably wouldn't be in school. —*Jay Blotcher*

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Money

Minnesota's Dayton supports DP benefits for federal workers.



WASHINGTON

Domestic partners' ally in Congress

US. senator Mark Dayton, a Minnesota Democrat, presented a practical argument for domestic-partner benefits when on June 27 he introduced legislation that would extend health, retirement, and life insurance benefits to same-sex partners of federal employees.

"Up to 40% of an employ-

ee's compensation these days is in the benefits," Dayton said. "So if someone is being denied those benefits, they are essentially taking a 40% pay cut."

Minnesota's other U.S. senator, Democrat Paul Wellstone, offered a similar bill a few years ago, but it didn't pass.

HEALTH Paying to look perfect

Gay men have always had a reputation for being preoccupied with improving their looks, but data from a July survey released by marketing and research firms Witeck-

Combs Communications and Harris Interactive suggest that more of them are taking their grooming to a new, high-tech level. A national consumer survey conducted via the Web between June 20 and 26 indicated gays were twice as likely as straight people to have undergone laser vi-

sion-correction surgery and seven times more likely than heterosexuals to have had permanent laser hair removal.

Wesley Combs, president of Witeck-Combs, says part of the reason for the disparity may be that gays are significantly less likely to have child-rearing

expenses and tend to have more discretionary income than straight consumers. That extra money is key—laser hair removal carries a price tag of \$300 and up for a single session, and laser vision-correction surgery can cost \$1,500 to \$2,000 per eye.—Bob Adams

Far Right

Big Brothers on your side

When word got out that Big Brothers Big Sisters of America was officially welcoming gay men and lesbians as youth mentors, conservative activists hit the roof. Since 1977 the organization has prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation, but in July it moved to enforce the rule after a few local chapters barred gays and lesbians from becoming mentors.

Far-right group Focus on the Family swiftly objected to the new mandate. Leader James Dobson issued an alert on his syndicated radio broadcast, and the group's Web site



and E-mail newsletter urged people to contact Big Brothers to protest.

Mack Koonce, Big Brothers' executive vice president and CEO, told *The Philadelphia Inquirer* that his group "doesn't have the broad goal of teaching heterosexual, marital relationships. We look at: Do the kids stay in school? Do they improve peer and family relationships? That's what we think the big issues are."

Transitions

DIED: Robert Giard, 62, gay photographer known for taking portraits of famous gay and lesbian writers, of a heart attack, July 9. Giard lived in Amagansett, N.Y., but was traveling by bus from Minneapolis to a portrait session in Chicago when he died.

DIED: Bill Plath, 77, San Francisco businessman and gay activist, of undisclosed causes, July 9. Plath co-founded the Society for Individual Rights, one of the first gay rights organizations, in 1964.

APPOINTED: Deborah Bonnack, as executive director of An Uncommon Legacy Foundation, effective July 22. The foundation annually provides scholarships for lesbian students and supports lesbian-oriented projects and organizations.

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Because it's strong and effective. Keep your viral load down with the #1 prescribed HIV medication of its kind.* VIRACEPT works with you to keep your life on track.

Because it's easy to live with. VIRACEPT's easy dosing schedule and manageable side effects have been helping all kinds of people continue to lead their lives on their own terms.

Because it saves future options. When choosing a treatment plan, it's important to consider what options you will have in the future. Studies show taking VIRACEPT early on leaves you with choices in treatment for later. Ask your doctor about your future with VIRACEPT.

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VIRACEPT is indicated in combination with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV infection. The most common side effect of VIRACEPT is diarrhea, which can usually be controlled with over-the-counter treatments. Some prescription and non-prescription drugs and supplements should not be taken with VIRACEPT, so talk to your doctor first. For some people, protease inhibitors have been associated with the onset or worsening of diabetes mellitus and hyperglycemia, changes in body fat, and increased bleeding in hemophiliacs. HIV drugs do not cure HIV infection or prevent you from spreading the virus.

Refer to the important information on the next page. For more information, call toll free 1-888-VIRACEPT or visit www.viracept.com.





VIRACEPT®

(nefazinavir mesylate)

Tablets and Oral Powder

Information for Patients

about VIRACEPT® (nfa-cpt)

Generic Name: nefazinavir (nfa-cpt) mesylate

For the Treatment of Human

Immunodeficiency that HIV Infects.

Please read this information carefully before taking VIRACEPT. Also, please read this leaflet each time you renew the prescription. Just in case anything has changed. This is a summary and not a replacement for a careful discussion with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss VIRACEPT when you start taking this medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when taking VIRACEPT and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

Alert: Read out about medicines that should NOT be taken with VIRACEPT. Please also read the section "MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH VIRACEPT".

WHAT IS VIRACEPT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

VIRACEPT is used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs in the treatment of people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, which can lead to the disease known as AIDS. It is not a cure for the immune system. After a large number of CD4 cells have been destroyed, the infected person develops acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

VIRACEPT works by blocking HIV protease - a protein-cutting enzyme, which is required for HIV to multiply. VIRACEPT has been shown to significantly reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. Although VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, VIRACEPT can help reduce your risk for death and illness associated with HIV. HIV patients who take VIRACEPT also had significant increases in the number of CD4 count.

VIRACEPT should be taken together with other antiretroviral drugs such as Ritonavir (abacavir, AZT, Efavirenz, lamivudine, 3TC, or Zeffit® (saquinavir, d4T), failing VIRACEPT in combination with other antiretroviral drugs reduces the amount of HIV in the body (both total and CD4 counts).

VIRACEPT may be taken by adults, adolescents, and children 2 years of age or older. Studies in infants younger than 2 years of age are now taking place.

DOES VIRACEPT CURE HIV OR AIDS?

VIRACEPT is not a cure for HIV infection or AIDS. People taking VIRACEPT may still develop opportunistic infections or other conditions associated with HIV infection. These include pneumocystis pneumonia, candidiasis, mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) infections, and Kaposi's sarcoma. There is no proof that VIRACEPT can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT TAKE VIRACEPT?

Together with your doctor, you decide whether VIRACEPT is appropriate for you. In making your decision, the following should be considered:

Allergies: If you have had a serious allergic reaction to VIRACEPT, you must take VIRACEPT. If you should also inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you have any known allergies to substances such as other medicines, foods, preservatives, or dyes.

If you are pregnant: The effects of VIRACEPT on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

If you are breast-feeding: You should discuss with your doctor the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that it can be transmitted through breast-feeding. Women should not breast-feed if they have HIV.

Children: VIRACEPT is available for the treatment of children 2 through 13 years of age with HIV. There is a power form of VIRACEPT that can be mixed with milk, baby formula, or foods to make powders. Instructions on how to take VIRACEPT Oral Powder can be found in a later section that discusses how VIRACEPT Oral Powder should be prepared.

If you have liver disease: VIRACEPT has not been studied in people with liver disease. If you have liver disease, you should tell your doctor before taking VIRACEPT.

Other medical problems: Certain medical problems may affect the use of VIRACEPT. Some people taking protease inhibitors have developed new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Some people with hypertension have had increased bleeding. It is not known whether the protease inhibitors caused these problems. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have hypertension types A and D, diabetes mellitus, or an increase in blood urea nitrogen (BUN) uric acids.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking protease inhibitors. These changes include an unusual amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("shoulder hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the face, legs, arms and torso may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

CAN VIRACEPT BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS?

VIRACEPT may interact with other drugs, including those you take without a prescription. You must discuss with your doctor any drugs that you are taking or are planning to take before you take VIRACEPT.

Medicines you should not take with VIRACEPT:

Proposed® (indapamide, for heartburn)

Cardizem® (verapamil, for irregular heartbeat)

Quinidine (for irregular heartbeat; also known as Quinaglute®, Cardizem®, Quicard®, and others)

Ergot derivatives (Catergol® and others, for migraine headache)

Halcion® (triazolam)

Verapamil (nifedipine)

Mevacor® (lovastatin, for cholesterol lowering)

Zocor® (simvastatin, for cholesterol lowering)

Taking the above drugs with VIRACEPT may cause serious and/or life-threatening adverse events.

Rituxan® (for tuberculosis), also known as Rituximab®, Rhinov®, Ritater®, or Rituximab®.

This drug reduces blood levels of VIRACEPT.

Dose reduction required if you take VIRACEPT with Mycobutin® (rifabutin, for MAC), you will need to take a lower dose of Mycobutin.

A change of therapy should be considered if you are taking VIRACEPT with:

Phenothiazine

Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)

Cadazepam (Tevetrol® and others)

These agents may reduce the amount of VIRACEPT in your blood and make it less effective.

Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

If you are taking the pill to prevent pregnancy, you should use a different type of contraception since VIRACEPT may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.

Special considerations

Before you take Viracept® (nelfinavir) with VIRACEPT, talk to your doctor about possible drug interactions and side effects if you take Viracept and VIRACEPT together. You may be at risk for side effects of Viracept such as the blood test results, which change when you take both Viracept and VIRACEPT. If an interaction lasts longer than 4 hours, you should seek immediate medical assistance to avoid permanent damage to your penis. Your doctor can explain these symptoms to you.

It is not recommended to take VIRACEPT with the cholesterol-lowering drugs Mevacor® (lovastatin) or Zocor® (simvastatin) because of possible drug interactions. There is also an increased risk of drug interactions between VIRACEPT and Lipitor® (atorvastatin) and Baycol® (cerivastatin).

Talk to your doctor before you take either of these cholesterol-reducing drugs with VIRACEPT.

Taking St. John's Wort® (Hypericum perforatum), an herbal product sold as an over-the-counter or prescription product, St. John's Wort with VIRACEPT is not recommended. Talk to your doctor if you are taking or are planning to take St. John's Wort. Taking St. John's Wort may decrease VIRACEPT levels and increase viral load and possible resistance to VIRACEPT or cause resistance to other antiretroviral drugs.

TAKING VIRACEPT WITH OTHER ANTI-HIV DRUGS

Taking VIRACEPT together with other anti-HIV drugs increases their ability to fight the virus. It also reduces the opportunity for resistant viruses to grow. Based on your history of taking other anti-HIV medicines, your doctor will direct you on how to take VIRACEPT and other anti-HIV medicines. These drugs should be taken in a certain order or at specific times. This will depend on how many times a day each medicine should be taken. It will also depend whether it should be taken with or without food.

Resistant analgesics: No drug interaction problems were seen when VIRACEPT was given with:

Rituxan (rituximab, AZT)

Efavirenz (efavirenz, 3TC)

Zidovudine (ZDV)

Video® (didanosine, ddI)

If you are taking both Video® (ddI) and VIRACEPT:
Take VIRACEPT and Video® (ddI) on an empty stomach. Therefore, you should take VIRACEPT with food one hour after or more than two hours before you take Video®.

Nonnucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs):

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

Viramune® (nevirapine)

The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood is unchanged. A dose adjustment is not needed when VIRACEPT is used with Viramune.

Sustiva® (efavirenz)

The amount of VIRACEPT in your blood may be increased. A dose adjustment is not needed when VIRACEPT is used with Sustiva.

Other NNRTIs:

When VIRACEPT is taken together with:

Crixivan® (indinavir)

The amount of both drugs in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination. Norvir® (ritonavir)

The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

Intravir® (saquinavir)

The amount of saquinavir in your blood may be increased. Currently, there are no safety and efficacy data available from the use of this combination.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIRACEPT?

Like all medicines, VIRACEPT can cause side effects. Most of the side effects experienced with VIRACEPT have been mild to moderate. Side effects are the most common side effects when taking VIRACEPT and are often taken at least twice daily for a month or more during treatment. In clinical studies, about 15-20% of patients receiving VIRACEPT 750 mg three times daily (three times daily or 1250 mg (five tablets) two times daily four or more times a day in most cases, diarrhea can be controlled using antidiarrheal medicines, such as Imodium® A-D (domperidone) and others, which are available without a prescription.

Other side effects that occurred in 2% or more of patients receiving VIRACEPT include nausea, gas and rash.

There were other side effects noted in clinical studies that occurred in less than 2% of patients receiving VIRACEPT. However, these side effects may be as serious as those listed above. These side effects may occur at any time during treatment. There may not be many differences in side effects in patients who took VIRACEPT along with other drugs compared with those who took only the other drug. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIRACEPT?

VIRACEPT is available only with your doctor's prescription. Your doctor may prescribe the light blue VIRACEPT tablet either as 1250 mg (five tablets) twice daily or as 750 mg (three tablets) twice daily. You should take VIRACEPT twice daily with a meal or a light snack. VIRACEPT tablets are film-coated to help make the tablets easier to swallow.

Take VIRACEPT exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not increase or decrease any doses or the number of doses per day. Also, like medicine for the exact period of time that your doctor has instructed. Do not stop taking VIRACEPT without first consulting with your doctor, even if you are feeling better.

Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give VIRACEPT to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

The dosing of VIRACEPT in children may be different for you than for other patients. Follow the directions from your doctor exactly as written on the label. The amount of VIRACEPT in the blood should remain somewhat consistent over time. Missing doses will cause the concentration of VIRACEPT to decrease; therefore, you should not miss any doses. However, if you miss a dose, you should take the dose as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose and future doses as originally scheduled.

Dosing in adults (including children 14 years of age and older)

The recommended adult dose of VIRACEPT is 1250 mg (five tablets) taken twice a day or 750 mg (three tablets) taken three times a day. Each dose should be taken with a meal or light snack.

Dosing in children 2 to 13 years of age

The VIRACEPT dose in children depends on their weight. The recommended dose is 20 to 30 mg/kg (or 10 to 14 mg/pound) per dose, taken three times daily with a meal or light snack. This can be administered either in tablet form or, in children unable to take tablets, as VIRACEPT Oral Powder.

Dose instructions will be provided by the child's doctor. The dose will be determined by measuring the child's height, weight, or age. A measuring spoon, or one or more teaspoons, depending on the weight and size of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart below.

Pediatric Dose to be Administered Three Times Daily			
BODY WEIGHT	NUMBER OF LEVEL SCOOPS	NUMBER OF LEVEL TEASPOONS	NUMBER OF TABLETS
7 to <15	15.5 mg <15 kg	4	5
9.5 to <16.5	18.5 mg <16.5 kg	5	1 1/4
10.5 to <12	23 mg <12 kg	6	1 1/2
12 to <14	26.5 mg <14 kg	7	1 3/4
14 to <16	31 mg <16 kg	8	2
16 to <18	35 mg <18 kg	9	2 1/4
18 to <23	36.5 mg <23 kg	10	2 1/2
≥23	49.5 mg ≥23 kg	15	3 3/4

In measuring oral powder, the scoop or teaspoon should be level.

• 1 level scoop contains 50 mg of VIRACEPT. Use only the scoop provided with your VIRACEPT bottle.

• 1 level teaspoon contains 200 mg of VIRACEPT. Note: A measuring spoon or one or more teaspoons, depending on the weight and size of the child. The amount of oral powder or tablets to be given to a child is described in the chart above.

Do not add water to capsules or tablets of oral powder, juice, such as orange or grapefruit juice, apple juice, or apple sauce, because this may create a bitter taste.

Once the powder is mixed, it may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated for up to 6 hours. Do not heat the mixed dose once it has been prepared.

Do not add water to bottles of oral powder.

VIRACEPT powder is supplied with a scoop for measuring. For help in determining the amount of powder for your child, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

VIRACEPT Oral Powder contains aspirin, a low-calorie sweetener, and therefore should not be taken by children with phenylketonuria (PKU).

HOW SHOULD VIRACEPT ORAL POWDER BE STORED?

Keep VIRACEPT and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Keep medicine and other items at room temperature between 59°F and 86°F away from sources of heat or cold such as stoves, fireplaces, ovens, or other heating places. Heat and moisture may reduce the effectiveness of VIRACEPT.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is not in the reach of children.

Discuss all questions about your health with your doctor. If you have any questions about VIRACEPT or any other medications you are taking, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You can also call 1-888-VIRACEPT (1-888-847-2327) toll free.

Call 1-888-VIRACEPT

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On the Web

This week on Advocate.com

BREAKING NEWS: Visit www.advocate.com for the latest news, entertainment, and health headlines, updated twice a day.

GAY GAMES PREVIEW

The secrets of Australia

If you're wondering what a trip to Australia for this fall's Gay Games VI will be like, join Advocate correspondent Dan Allen for his eye-opening 10-day Aussie excursion, taking in the sites and meeting the people. Exclusively on Advocate.com.



FIRST-PERSON

Elementary school drag queen

What's a mother to do when her 11-year-old son prefers wigs and heels to football helmets and Nikes? Help make him the most celebrated drag star in his school, of course. Only on Advocate.com, read one mother's intimate account of her happily cross-dressing child.

ADVOCATE TRAVEL

Paradise in Napa

Nestled in a wooded glen in Northern California's wine country is Meadowood, a resort that's luxurious, low-key, and gay-friendly, with golf, tennis, swimming, croquet, hiking, fine dining, and, of course, great wine. Get a taste of the good life at advocate.com/travel.



You can find links to related Web sites for most stories in this issue at www.advocate.com. When you see the movie icon at the end of a story, you will also find additional exclusive features at www.advocate.com.

From the Advocate Archives

August 5, 1982 The first Gay Games

Gay Games VI hopes to have a record number of participants in Sydney this fall, but not long before the first Gay Games—called the Gay Olympic

Games by organizers—in 1982, it wasn't clear if the event would even take place.

For one thing, the U.S. Olympic Committee filed a lawsuit that ended up prohibiting organizers from using the word *Olympics*.

But the toughest problem, games founder Tom Waddell told *Advocate* reporter Paul Trefazer, was that people doubted the event's seriousness. Fund-raising was difficult: A direct-mail effort sent to a list of 12,000 known contributors to gay causes yielded a

response of less than 1%.

Gradually not only San Francisco athletes but 1,600 athletes from 10 countries participated.

Waddell, a former Olympic decathlete, told Trefazer that he looked forward to the pageantry of the opening ceremonies, which kicked off the games August 28, 1982. "It will be a rather emotional and stirring event," he said. "The games will...create a sense of unity for those who live openly gay lives and blow the lid [off] this oppression that everybody feels."

—Don Romesburg



Out of site

"Objectionable" content gets some gay groups booted offline

Guerrilla Queer Bar is the latest online gay group to tussle with its Internet service provider after Yahoo! temporarily disabled the site in June for containing "objectionable" content.

GuerrillaQueerBar.com, which serves as a message board and information center for social activities in the San Francisco area, attracts up to 6,000 unique visitors a month. According to group founder Brian McConnell, the curt E-mail he received notifying him that his site was in violation of Yahoo!'s terms of service

included no specific example of what was objectionable. "Our users weren't happy, and boy, did they let [Yahoo!] know," he said.

Yahoo! subsequently restored the site and apologized to the group. "The LGBT community is very



Guerrillaqueerbar.com serves as an info center for social activities in and around San Francisco.

important to Yahoo!" said Yahoo! spokeswoman Mary Osaka. "When problems arise, we take steps to make sure everyone is treated fairly."

Complaints of Internet companies labeling gay-themed sites as objectionable or even pornography remain a common problem, however, according to Cathy Renna of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, which says it monitors gay and lesbian Web sites and works with Internet service providers to ensure that gay users are treated fairly.

"The biggest issue is how frontline representatives interpret what is objectionable," said Renna. "We work with these groups to help them define what is truly objectionable and then train their staff." —Jeremiah Hall

The Buzz

Silenced:
American Idol's
Web site
suddenly
vanished.



Idol gossip

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR AN AMERICAN IDOL to be gay?

When it comes to Fox's red-hot talent search series *American Idol*, it seems that issue is open to debate. One day after *The Buzz* became aware that 19-year-old contestant Jim Verratos was keeping an accessible Internet journal that included open discussion of his homosexuality—prompting us to ask Fox for an interview with Verratos—the Web diary was quickly deleted.

Portions of the journal leading up to his debut on *American Idol* reveal a good-natured young man with an affinity for teen-popstars like 'N Sync and O-Town, "good guy flicks" like *The Broken Hearts Club*, and writing songs for his close friends. In one particularly charming entry, he declares, "I found out that a guy likes me!!! Umm, totally random and I never even saw it coming, but hey, it's cool. He's adorable in, like, every way."

The Chicago-based singer was cut from the viewer-pollled program on July 17, and repeated calls to Fox were not returned. Ironically, the winner of *Pop Idol*, the smash British program that spawned *American Idol*, was Will Young, who came out shortly after his first single topped the U.K. charts.

Murder most gay

IT WAS A REAL-LIFE GAY-ON-GAY crime of passion. In a San Diego gay bar, Thomas Mayta fired a gun at Peter Blasik, missing him and killing bystander Gregory Hissel. On September 8, Mayta's murder trial will hit prime time on NBC's *Crime & Punishment*—this season's reality spin-off of the mighty *Law & Order* franchise.

Bill Guttentag, the show's executive producer, stresses that the episode will not "fan the flames of hatred," he says. "To look at a person who goes into a bar with a loaded gun and say, 'This represents gay people,' that's the prism in which a hateful person looks at the show. [Instead] you can focus on all the other people in the episode, starting with the victim."

Lights, camera, bridesmaids!

AS FAR AS REALITY TV goes, cockroach-eating and skydiving pale in comparison to the wedding-day jitters that plague the subjects of Bravo's deliciously gripping reality miniseries, *Gay Weddings*. Over the course of eight episodes (airing September 2-5), we follow four gay couples—Scott and Harley, Lupe and Sonja, Dan and Gregg, and Duke and Eve—as they wrestle with homophobic reception locations, stores (*The Buzz* learned that the camera crew was

booted when proprietors realized these were *gay* weddings at hand), and family members. As one mismatched, argumentative couple ponders breakup by the end of episode 1, another copes with a partner's "runaway bride" reputation.

"It's definitely a scary time," says Kirk Marcolina, who along with fellow out producer Douglas Ross (*Fear Factor*) created the ultimately inspiring miniseries. "These people were facing criticism from fami-



lies, risking losing a mother or sister. But they had a chance to take a pioneering step, make a commitment, and also let it be part of a TV show, so it was a much bigger challenge than to eat a rattlesnake butt."

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MORE THAN FRIENDS

Miami
COMMUNITY

NO TO DISCRIMINATION



POLITICS

Miami-Dade ja vu

Among those speaking out against the September 10 repeal effort is TV talk show host Cristina Saralegui.

A quarter century after Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children" campaign, Miami-Dade voters are again squaring off over gay rights **BY PETER FREIBERG**

The year was 1977, the place South Florida's Dade County. The world's attention was focused on gay rights, with singer and orange juice pitchwoman Anita Bryant leading a bizarre "Save Our Children" crusade to overturn a law protecting gay men and lesbians against discrimination. And when voters overwhelmingly repealed the ordinance, Bryant danced a jig, and her husband, Bob Green, kissed her for photographers. "This is what heterosexuals do, fellas," Green said.

The defeat was a watershed, galvanizing the gay rights movement nationally to organize for future battles while convincing far-right activists that they could raise money and gain power by fighting gay rights. It wasn't until 1998 that commissioners of what is now Miami-Dade County reinstated the an-

tidiscrimination protections. Now, 25 years after Bryant led her antigay crusaders to victory, the religious right has again forced a referendum in the hope of repealing the county's ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, public accommodations, and credit and finance.

With the vote looming on September 10, both sides face a very different political and demographic landscape this time around. Unlike in 1977, gay people now have overwhelming support from the political, business, and entertainment establishments. And Bryant, 62, whose postelection career disintegrated after gays picketed her appearances and boycotted Florida orange juice, won't be a factor this time around. "She's had enough of that; she wants to live her life," says Green, now her ex-husband, who lives in Miami Beach. "My opinion

is that [repeal is] not going to win. Times have changed, and people...have become desensitized [to gays]. Every other [TV] show has gay characters, and people just get used to it."

Nevertheless, leaders of No to Discrimination—SAVE Dade, the group organizing the campaign against the repeal, caution that the outcome remains very uncertain, even though their polling shows a majority backing the county law. "Our support was not a landslide by any means," says executive director Timothy Higdon, "but when you really present the issue as discrimination, people see that. Also, people are very proud of living in a world-class [metropolis] where discrimination's not tolerated. So those are the core messages we're hammering on."

The big question, Higdon says, is whether supporters can be mobilized to

vote in a typically low-turnout election in which primaries are the only other draw. "Our opposition is complacency," he says, adding that the organization is focusing on identifying 90,000 voters against discrimination and making sure they get to the polls. A loss, he says, would have national implications.

"This [election] is going to be a real measure of the cohesiveness and organization of the progressive community versus the ability of the Christian right," Higdon says. "If they're able to defeat us here, you're going to see a huge inflow of money back into the Christian Coalition."

No to Discrimination is seeking to raise \$1.4 million, but fund-raising is going slowly, says campaign cochair Heddy Perla. One fear, she says, is that the pro-repeal group, Take Back Miami-Dade County, an adjunct of the Christian Coalition, will unleash an advertising blitz just before the election that No to Discrimination will be unable to counter. Acknowledging the symbolic and possibly practical nationwide impact of a defeat, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is donating \$50,000 and sending most of its staff to Miami during the campaign's final three weeks, says executive director Lorri Jean. "We really want to draw a line in the sand here," she says, "and show that things have changed in the last 25 years." The Human Rights Campaign is donating an additional \$10,000 along with staff and volunteers.

Miami-Dade County is a sprawling metropolis that includes three cities that have their own gay-inclusive antidiscrimination laws in place. The importance of gay tourism in the area has helped unite county business leaders against repeal, says Dario Moreno, a political science professor at Florida International University. "They want Miami to have a reputation for tolerance," he says.

In Miami-Dade's ethnic cauldron, Hispanics—primarily Cuban-Americans, but many from Puerto Rico, Colombia, and elsewhere in Latin America—are dominant politically. But whites, African-Americans, and Haitians are also important. Among whites, Jews are strongly pro-gay, with the Greater Miami Jewish Federation voting more than 2½ years ago to oppose repeal. Among African-Americans, Take Back Miami-Dade has won back-



Anita Bryant kicked off the campaign against the first gay rights law in South Florida in 1977, but according to her ex-husband, she hasn't taken part in the current effort because "she's had enough of that."

ing from some ministers, but the NAACP and prominent black leaders have come out against repeal.

Hispanics will be crucial, since they will make up about 50% of the voters, Moreno says. He believes a majority of them will vote against repeal. For one thing, he says, Fidel Castro's Cuban regime has often been accused of harassing gay people, "and one way the [Miami-Dade] community can stick it in Castro's eye is by proving we're more tolerant toward gays." Moreno adds that opposition to the repeal by three top Cuban-American elected officials—Miami-Dade County executive mayor Alex Penelas, Miami mayor Manny Diaz, and Hialeah mayor Raul Martinez—and by Latin TV personality Cristina Saralegui and singer Gloria Estefan will also help.

Moreno credits Jorge Mursuit, former executive director of the organization that became No to Discrimination—SAVE Dade, with expanding gays' outreach to Hispanics. Mursuit, a gay Cuban-American who now is Florida director of the People for the American Way, is coordinating Hispanic outreach for the referendum campaign.

Take Back Miami-Dade likely will rely on conservative churches to mobilize its

backers, just as it did in gathering petitions that forced the referendum. (Spokesman Eladio José Armesto did not respond to repeated requests from *The Advocate* for an interview.) Take Back cochair Nathaniel Wilcox reiterated a constant theme when he described as a "sham" the pro-gay side's contention that the issue is discrimination, not homosexuality. "All this ordinance does is promote a lifestyle, not offer protection," Wilcox told *The Miami Herald*.

Ken Sherrill, who chairs the political science department at City University of New York's Hunter College, says the pro-gay side usually has an uphill battle in referendums because supporters are an "apathetic majority" who often don't vote, while the antigay forces are an "intense minority" certain to cast ballots. But No to Discrimination leaders say they've devised a winning strategy, if they can raise funds to execute it. "This is a turn-out-your-voting-base election," Higdon says. "It's not about changing people's hearts and minds. Do I think we can win? Yes. Do I think it's an assured thing? No." ■

Freiberg has written for the New York Post and The Washington Blade.

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White House AIDS shake-up

As one openly gay AIDS czar is replaced with another, activists are left to ask: What is Bush's AIDS strategy? **BY CHRIS BULL**



Joseph O'Neill (right) takes over for Scott Evertz as the director of the Office of National AIDS Policy.

When President Bush tapped Scott Evertz to lead his the Office of National AIDS Policy just over one year ago, the political fallout was immediate. Right-wing groups scolded the White House for elevating an openly gay Republican to the high-profile post. Gay Republicans hailed the appointment as proof the White House would not use sexual orientation as a bar to employment.

In late July, Bush replaced Evertz with another out gay man, Joseph O'Neill, who had been acting director of the Office of HIV/AIDS Policy at the Department of Health and Human Services. But this time around, the reaction was far more muted, and AIDS activists were left scratching their heads about what the change signaled about the direction of national AIDS policy.

"Frankly, we don't know exactly what to think about these moves," says Robert Dabney, director of communica-

tions for the National Minority AIDS Council, a Washington, D.C., lobbying group. "On the surface it looks like a mere shuffling of bodies. But there may well be way more to it than that."

The personnel change could not come at a more crucial time in the AIDS epidemic. For instance, a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that a majority of HIV-positive African-American men, many of them gay, did not know their HIV status.

The tumult in federal AIDS policy making was not limited to the Office of National AIDS Policy. At the time of Evertz's departure, media outlets reported that Patricia Ware, the executive director of the presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, had been fired from her post. One week later, however, the White House announced that Ware, who is often allied with conservative groups, would stay in the job. Evertz, meanwhile, was named special assistant to HHS secretary Tommy Thompson.

(Evertz did not respond to repeated requests seeking comment.)

Advocates for people with AIDS expressed concern that the White House is veering erratically between the political demands of right-wing groups that seek abstinence-only education programs and the more established AIDS lobbying groups in Washington, which have long advocated comprehensive HIV prevention programs. "The thing that concerns us most is, How do we counter the problems we are having with HIV prevention if there is not a consistent message from the top?" Dabney says. "There is some sense among AIDS activists that the right wing is using the White House to try to defuse the message about comprehensive AIDS education."

Ware tells *The Advocate* that she briefly considered taking another job in the Administration. But she says she quickly decided to stay in her current post, leading to the conflicting press reports. "There have been a lot of rumors swirling around Scott and Dr. O'Neill and me," she concedes. "But I can honestly say that no one has been tugging at me [to leave her post]. The White House has been supportive, and I've gotten nothing but support from AIDS groups and even the gay groups during this difficult period."

Whatever the reason behind the job changes, there is little doubt about O'Neill's qualifications for his appointment. A former staff physician at Chase Brexton Health Services in Baltimore, which has a predominantly gay clientele, he has served in a variety of HHS posts, including a position administering the Ryan White act. (Through the White House press office, O'Neill declined several interview requests.)

"With the conservative bent of this administration and with continued emphasis on abstinence-only programming, Dr. O'Neill will have an important role within the White House and federal government if he is to help us do our job on the front lines of the epidemic," Dabney says.

Ware agrees: "Dr. O'Neill is a physician, so he has the medical background we need. And since he is a seasoned bureaucrat, he can help plug all of us into the federal government and Congress. If there is one thing everyone can agree upon, no matter what their ideology, it's that he's the one for this job." ■



Army reservist Lior Kay argues that his stand against Israel's West Bank military actions is part of the "political process."

WORLD

The rite of refusal

Among the Israelis who refuse to serve in Palestinian territories are gay soldiers who say they're taking a stand against oppression **BY DUNCAN OSBORNE**

During the 3½ years he served in the Israel Defense Forces, beginning at age 18, Eshel Herzog was assigned to a tank artillery gun, serving in both southern Lebanon and in the Palestinian territory of the West Bank. Now 23 and no longer on active duty, the openly gay man is required by Israeli law to report for annual terms in the reserve army—sometimes for as long as 45 days—until he turns 45. But Herzog is refusing to do so. "I sent a letter to the army and also to the minister of defense [saying] that I am not going to serve in any way," he says.

Herzog is just one of hundreds of Israelis, many of them gay men and lesbians, who are illegally opting out of their required military duty in opposition to Israel's presence in the West Bank

and the Gaza Strip, which are home to more than 3 million Palestinians. For most of these men and women, their protest extends to service only in the territories, but Herzog says he won't participate in any mission, regardless of where he is ordered to serve. "There is no difference," he says. "When I serve inside Israel, they will send someone else [to the territories]. That is not making a political statement."

"My politics says that minorities should feel connected with any struggle against oppression," he continues. "I cannot see myself, as a gay [man], contributing to oppression [of] other minorities, including women, Palestinians, transgenders, whatever."

If any group of people can understand Herzog's position, he says, it

should be his fellow Jews, who have suffered oppression for centuries. "Every Jew should feel responsibility of the oppression he is being part of," Herzog says. "As an oppressed minority we should feel also a connection in our hearts. It's not only a logical connection, it's an emotional connection."

Similarly, Lior Kay, a 27-year-old reser-
ver, says he feels a special responsibility to oppose Israel's actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We are not only individuals," he says. "We are the gay community. As a community [we have] a power. We must have opinions about many issues, not about only gay issues. If we want rights, we must take part in the political process, not only the gay political process."

So far, Kay has served five reserve

terms, two of them in the Palestinian territories. Scheduled to report for his sixth term three days after being first interviewed for this story, he planned to tell his commanding officer that he would not serve in the territories and that he would not guard Palestinian prisoners. "I will refuse to go. I will go to jail. [The occupation] is destroying the Israeli society from the inside," he said at the time. Interviewed a week later, Kay happily reported that he was serving within Israel's borders excluding the Palestinian territories.

For its part, the army has promised to jail any refusers. *The Advocate's* telephone calls to the army's press offices in Israel and to the Israeli consulate in New York City were not returned.

Protest by refusal is not new to Israel. A group called Peace Now launched a similar campaign in 1982, in response to the country's invasion of Lebanon. The latest incarnation, called the Courage to Refuse, was prompted by an anonymous letter posted on the Internet earlier this year. "We hereby declare that we shall not continue to fight this war of the settlements," the letter states. "We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve, and humiliate an entire people. We hereby declare that we shall continue serving in the Israel Defense Forces in any mission that serves Israel's defense. The missions of occupation and oppression do not serve this purpose—and we shall take no part in them."

It's difficult to say just how many men and women have become refusers. At press time, 471 men and women had signed their names to the Courage to Refuse Internet posting. And according to Yesh Gvul, a refuser support group, as many as 600 soldiers have refused military orders to serve. As a result, 10 people are currently in jail, and, altogether, about 150 people have served some prison time.

Still, this may not be an accurate reflection of the breadth of the movement, says Danny Kaplan, who interviewed 22 gay IDF soldiers in preparation for his forthcoming book, *Brothers and Others in Arms: The Making of Love and War in Israeli Combat Units*. Many refusers have taken action outside the organized campaign and without the help of groups

such as Yesh Gvul. Kay's name, for example, is among those connected to the Courage to Refuse letter. Herzog's, however, is not.

"I think you have to differentiate between public and private refusal," Kaplan says. "I'm sure there are many more who do it on an unofficial level," he says. "There are many ways you can come to an agreement with your commander, and I'm sure that many people

"Arabs and Muslims enjoy more freedom in Israel—because it is a free society—than they would in almost any other country."

For those reasons, Mones says, he disagrees with the refusers' tactics—because, he believes, they are endangering the very society that makes their refusal possible. "I've met some of these [refusals] over the years, and, frankly, some of them have appeared to me to

"I will refuse to go. I will go to jail. [The occupation] is destroying the Israeli society from the inside," says Lior Kay, a 27-year-old refuser.

do that. The phenomenon that I am seeing now in the media is really people who want to stress and make a statement of their political agenda. The political aspect of refusing to serve is very extreme."

When it comes to gay men and lesbians, the Israeli military has one of the most progressive policies in the world. With a few exceptions, the country requires every man to serve three years in the service upon turning 18 and every woman to serve two years. Mandatory reserve duty follows for most citizens. Since 1993 the IDF has made no distinction between straight and gay soldiers.

"At least officially, gays are less oppressed in Israel than in almost any country in the world," says Glenn Mones, a board member at the New York gay synagogue Congregation Beth Simchat Torah and the former national director for Likud USA, the American branch of Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's political party.

At the same time, Mones says,

be very troubled individuals," he says.

Herzog, of course, disagrees. He says supporters of the country's current policies regarding the West Bank and the



Do you think there
is a connection
between support
for gay and lesbian
rights and support
for Palestinian
rights?

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Gaza Strip are the ones who are most opposed to the individual freedoms Mones speaks of.

"The connection between militarism and chauvinism is quite obvious," he says. "We feel it every day in what the people say to us at demonstrations. They shout 'Lesbians!' and 'Cocksuckers!' and 'Go bugger Arafat's ass!'"

For Herzog, it's the ongoing Middle East conflict that poses the biggest threat to gay and lesbian rights and to Israel as a whole. "Palestinian terrorism is not a real threat to Israel," he says. "What is a real threat to Israel is not acknowledging that we live inside the Middle East. We cannot keep on living by our swords. Sooner or later we will have to make peace with our neighbors." ■

Osborne also writes for New York City's Gay City News.



When Nile Park went to Amsterdam, she studied ideologies of black women's sexuality.

GOING DUTCH

Several U.S. colleges offer gay studies, but only one sends its students to Amsterdam for the course work By Steve Desroches

As millions of students head back to colleges across the country this month, officials at some of their schools will be debating the merits of adding gay studies programs to their curriculums. Administrators at the University of North Carolina, for example, announced at the end of July that they were considering the addition of a sexuality studies program at the Chapel Hill school. Advocates of the program say its institution would help foster better understanding and acceptance of gay people on the Southern campus.

And while the proposed program at UNC and those already in place at schools such as Duke University, the University of Michigan, and the University of California, Berkeley, are certainly groundbreaking, there is a gay studies program at a comparatively small Vermont school that should really have officials at these bigger colleges taking notice.

Based in Brattleboro, Vt., the School for International Training has been offering Sexuality, Gender, and Identity to students for close to a decade. For the semester-long study-abroad program, students are sent to Amsterdam, where they are introduced to the city's vibrant gay and lesbian communities and, in some cases, live with gay host families. The program costs about \$13,700 per student, and students receive 16 undergraduate credits that are accepted at most U.S. universities, says Rebecca Hovey, dean of SIT's study-abroad program.

For the first several years, attendance hovered around 6–8 students a

semester, but in 1998 participation suddenly doubled, Hovey says. Seventeen students are participating in the fall 2002 semester. "I think part of the reason for [the program's jump in popularity] is because more American undergraduate colleges are addressing GLBT concerns," she says. "Gay and lesbian studies is emerging as an academic field of study the way women's studies and ethnic studies did in the 1970s."

Though a graduate school domestically, SIT offers a number of study-abroad programs for undergraduates, including Modernization and Social Change in Jordan and Women and Democratization in the Balkans, but the sexuality program is among the school's most popular.

It's also among the school's most academically challenging programs. In addition to an independent study project (topics include male prostitution, domestic-partnership laws, and how religious and sexual identities relate to each other), students also must complete a field-study seminar in addition to the program's main seminar, which includes trips to London and Berlin to compare other European attitudes toward gender and sexuality with the Dutch perspective. Trips to a sex-reassignment clinic and to the Sachsenhausen or Ravensbrück concentration camps to learn about the Nazi persecution of gays and lesbians are some of the other excursions.

When the program was first conceptualized, the Netherlands seemed like the natural choice. "The Netherlands is in such a unique situation," says Peg Alden, who is the founding academic director of Sexuality, Gen-

der, and Identity. "It is so tolerant but is also unique in academics." Alden notes that no other country has such extensive gay and lesbian studies archives and resources, and students are thrilled with the academic opportunities available to them that they can't find in the United States.

"I felt like Charlie finding the golden ticket in a Wonka bar when I found this program," says Alex McCown, an alumnus of the program and of St. Paul, Minn.'s Macalester College. A women's and gender studies major at the time, McCown knew as soon as he learned about the SIT program that it was right for him. "It was great because it was so radical," he says. "Sessions ranged from Judith Butler to two women who came in to teach us about intensive S/M."

While students experience Dutch society's acceptance of varying sexualities, they also find out that the Netherlands is not always the tolerant utopia it is perceived by many to be. "It is very difficult to be a person of color there," says Nile Park, an Asian-American senior at New York's Vassar College who attended the Netherlands program in fall 2001. "I would be riding my bike and people would shout racist remarks at me. It was very disturbing."

In fact, the students found that the issues of racism and homophobia are still so prevalent in the Netherlands that many of them chose it to be the focus of their independent study project. Park, a women's studies and political science major, researched ideologies of black women's sexuality, particularly that of women from the former Dutch colony of Suriname. ►



Nick Sakurai went to Amsterdam to study the lives of local gay men of color.

Still, almost all the students agree that actual importance placed on sexual orientation is significantly less in the Netherlands than it is in the United States. "More [Dutch] youth prefer to go without labels," says Nick Sakurai, a sociology major from the University of Illinois who went to Amsterdam in spring 2001 to study the lives of local young gay men of color.

Sakurai says the program was perfect for him because it complemented both his academic agenda as a sociology major and his personal goals as a gay activist. He feels the experience will help him as an activist by giving him a broader perspective on issues of gender and sexual identity.

It's that kind of versatility that academia needs, says Glenn Grossman, a University of North Carolina

graduate student associated with the campus task force that recommended and won approval for that school's proposed sexuality studies program. "Most colleges categorize gay-related study programs under student affairs, and the problem with that is that subjects are taken much more seriously when they're categorized under academic affairs," Grossman says. "Acknowledging gender and sexuality studies as an academic pursuit encourages respect for all people. Regardless of what someone believes, if a student hasn't critically examined these issues, they can't consider themselves an educated member of society." ■

Desroches also writes for The Village Voice.

THEY WANT U

A college fair in Boston helps connect gay and lesbian students with schools who want them on campus

Applying for college is stressful enough without having to worry about whether you can be comfortable being out on campus. And addressing sexual orientation is seldom a part of a university recruiter's "come to our school" pitch. But that's starting to change since last spring, when Massachusetts state officials held the first-ever gay and lesbian college fair, in Boston.

"We saw lots of gay high school students wasting energy worrying if they should put down that they were gay on their applications," says Mark Taggart of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, which organized the fair along with the state's annual gay-straight youth pride celebration. "We also saw that lots of colleges were trying to reach gay youth and that there was no venue where the two of them could come together, so we said, 'Let's try a college fair.'"

More than 1,000 prospective students and 40 colleges and universities, including traditionally conservative

schools such as Boston College, attended the fair. And organizers expect to have 100 schools at a second event next spring. "We never dreamed it would have this level of impact," Taggart says. "There is a definite movement in college recruitment to reach LGBT students."

Just how significant a movement, however, is still unclear. Recruitment of gay students—in the way many schools do for students from other minority groups—hasn't started yet. But some schools are considering efforts at tracking the number of gay and lesbian students who apply to their institutions and then ensuring their safety and comfort when they arrive on campus.

Officials at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Wash., for example, considered adding an entry on its application this year where students could declare their sexual orientation. They decided against it for privacy reasons, but, says director of freshmen admissions Melanie Reed, "Instead, we are going to have a list of activities and interests, one of which will be gay and lesbian Is-



Tammy Faye Bakker Messner joined Mark Taggart at last year's college fair.

sues. If a student checks that box, we can put them in contact with LGBT students and faculty members on campus."

Meanwhile, American University in Washington, D.C., is launching a research project this fall to determine how the school can better serve its gay applicants and prospective students. American University officials are also testing creative ways to make all students feel welcome. For example, the university schedules Internet chat sessions for prospective gay and lesbian students after episodes of *Will & Grace*. In addition, when applicants visit campus overnight they can request to stay with a gay-friendly host. "We want them to know that it is OK to live your life as an openly gay student here," says admissions counselor J. Bradley Blankenship. —Steve Desroches

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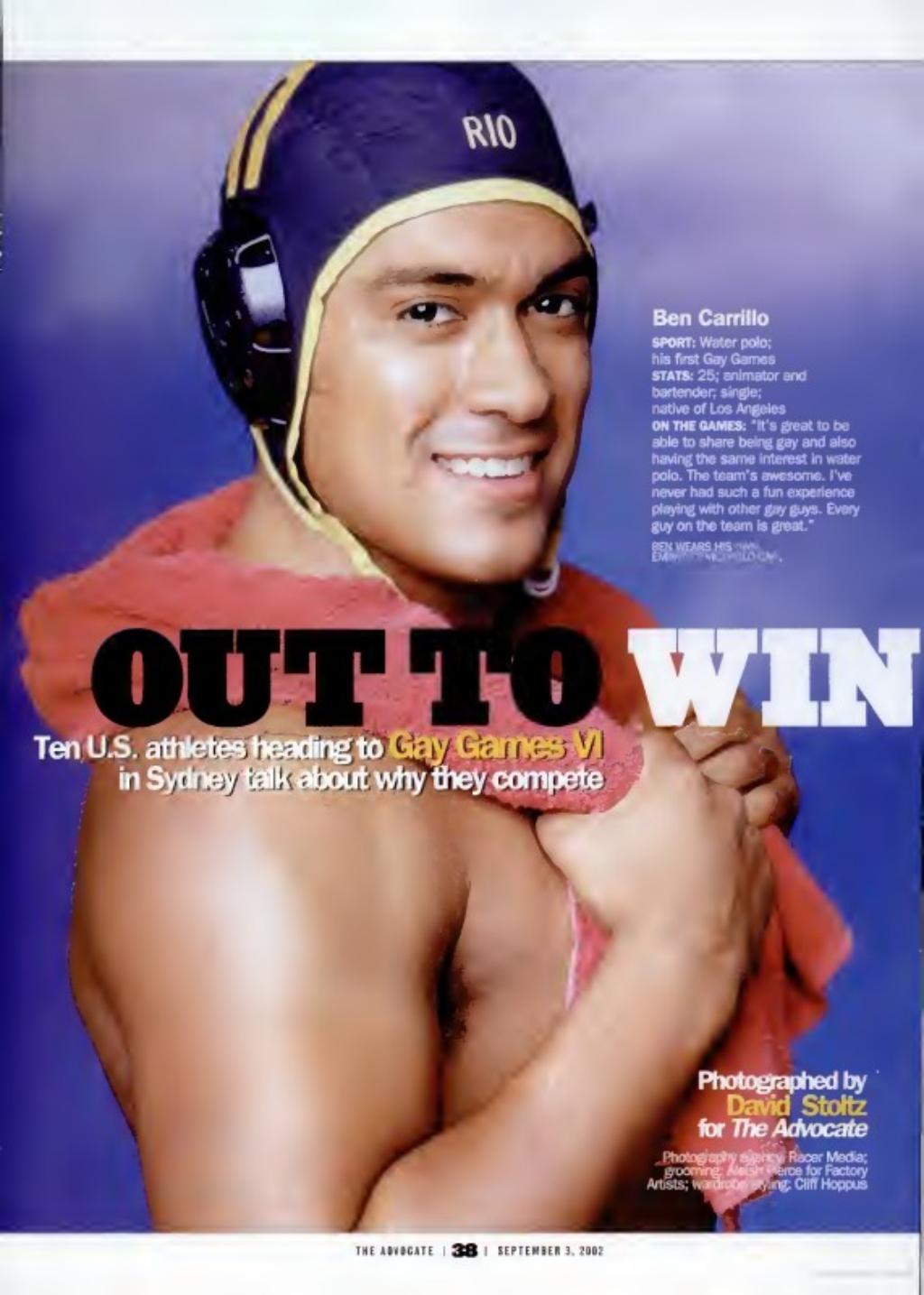
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Ben Carrillo

SPORT: Water polo;
his first Gay Games

STATS: 25; animator and
bartender; single;
native of Los Angeles

ON THE GAMES: "It's great to be
able to share being gay and also
having the same interest in water
polo. The team's awesome. I've
never had such a fun experience
playing with other gay guys. Every
guy on the team is great."

BEN WEARS HIS TEAM'S CAP.
EMILIO MACHADO/CAP.

OUT TO WIN

Ten U.S. athletes heading to **Gay Games VI**
in Sydney talk about why they compete

Photographed by
David Stoltz
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Joy Mendenhall

SPORT: Water polo; her first Gay Games

STATS: 26; teacher; partner to a Gay Games triathlete; native of Rensselaer, Ind.

ON THE GAMES: "To me, it's making a statement that's bigger than just 'Hi, I'm gay.' [It's] 'Look at all these cultures that are able to come here—and different religions, different types of people—and we're converging on the same stage, and we're all getting along.' It's something that our world leaders need to maybe come over and take notice of."

JOY WEARS HER OWN
ADIDAS SWIMSUIT.



Melody Roth

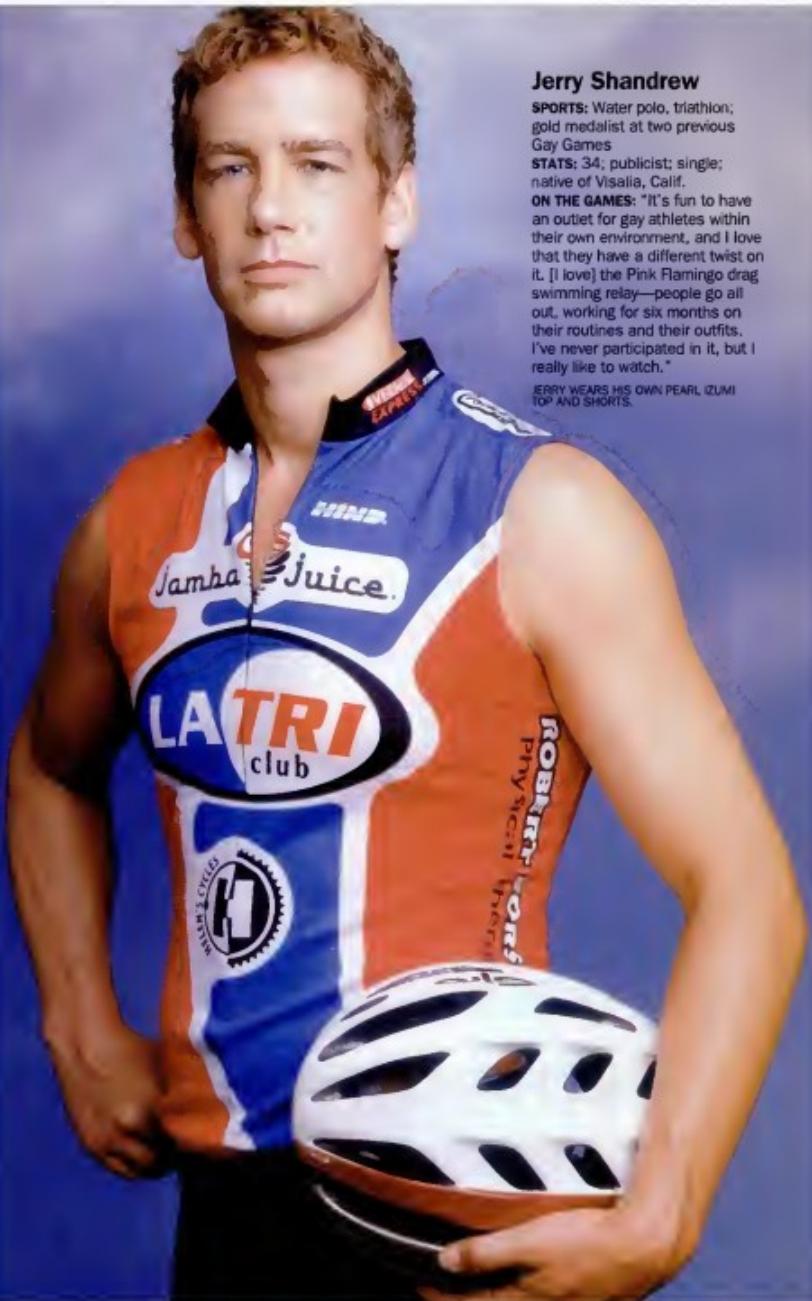
SPORT: Bodybuilding, her first Gay Games
STATS: 41; personal trainer;

"questionable" relationship status;
resident of Long Beach, Calif.

ON THE GAMES: "It's going to be the opportunity of a lifetime. I'm thrilled. I just love to compete. I like getting on stage. I like being in front of the camera. I like working hard and having people appreciate what I've worked for. [Knowing the games are coming up] gives me something to train toward. It's hard to explain the feeling of going through that process of getting your body fat down to 6%-7% and getting on stage. It's just a great feeling to know you can do that with your body. It's really cool."

MELODY WEARS AN ADIDAS TOP AND SHORTS.

GAY GAMES VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA GAY GAMES VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



Jerry Shandrew

SPORTS: Water polo, triathlon; gold medalist at two previous Gay Games

STATS: 34; publicist; single; native of Visalia, Calif.

ON THE GAMES: "It's fun to have an outlet for gay athletes within their own environment, and I love that they have a different twist on it. [I love] the Pink Flamingo drag swimming relay—people go all out, working for six months on their routines and their outfits. I've never participated in it, but I really like to watch."

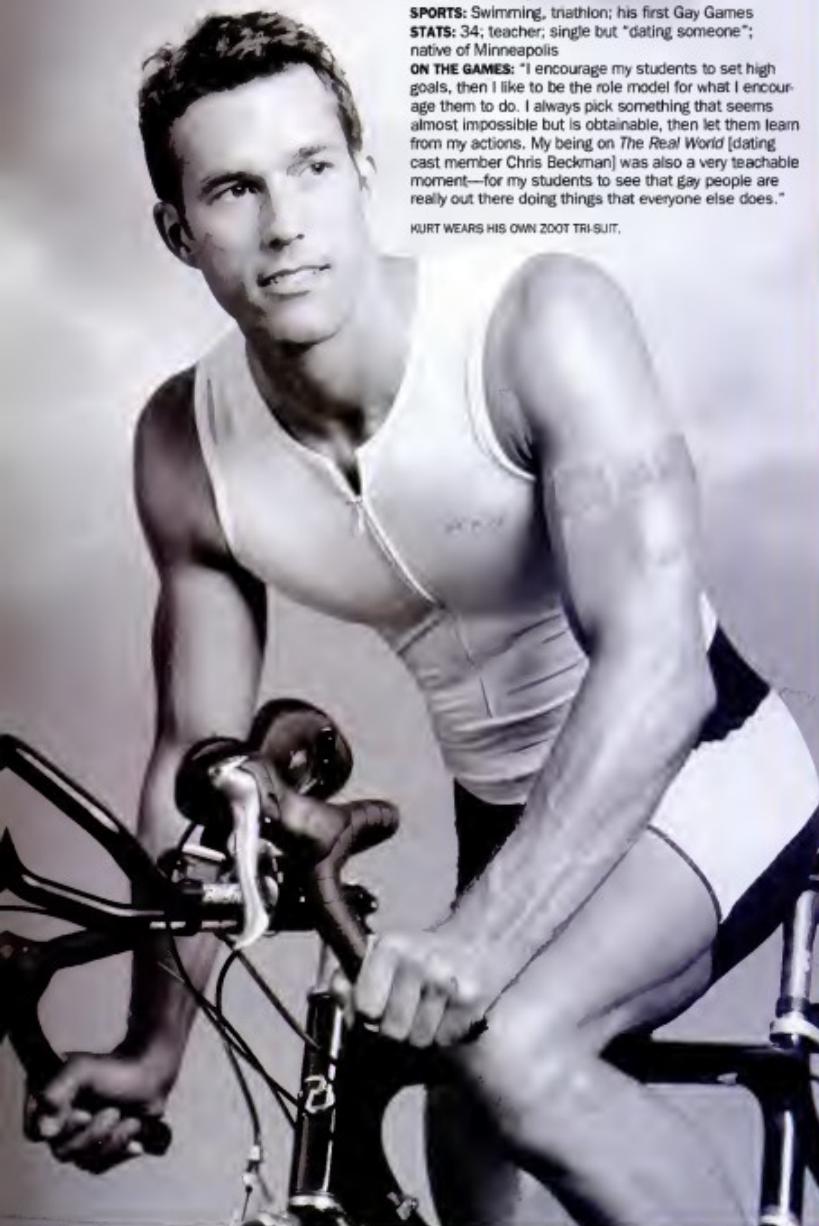
JERRY WEARS HIS OWN PEARL IZUMI TOP AND SHORTS.

Kurt Gering

SPORTS: Swimming, triathlon; his first Gay Games
STATS: 34; teacher; single but "dating someone";
native of Minneapolis

ON THE GAMES: "I encourage my students to set high goals, then I like to be the role model for what I encourage them to do. I always pick something that seems almost impossible but is obtainable, then let them learn from my actions. My being on *The Real World* [dating cast member Chris Beckman] was also a very teachable moment—for my students to see that gay people are really out there doing things that everyone else does."

KURT WEARS HIS OWN ZOOT TRI-SUIT.





Lauri Stock

SPORT: Track; her second Gay Games
STATS: 45; criminal defense attorney; partner to Jenny Stary; native of St. Pete Beach, Fla.
ON THE GAMES: "Before Amsterdam, Jenny tried to describe to me how much I was going to enjoy the games and how exciting and fun it was going to be, and she was right. Everywhere you went, people were so happy to see you and talk to you and have their pictures taken with you. It was like 10 days of being adored."

Jenny Stary

SPORT: Track and field; her fifth Gay Games
STATS: 44; pharmaceutical company market researcher; partner for six years to Lauri Stock; native of Claremont, Calif.
ON THE GAMES: "It's the most important thing in my life. [Having just come out before the 1986 games], I suddenly had a chance to do the thing that I had been training for, representing my nation for, standing up and being well received, and now I could do that for the gay community, and I just loved that."

Lauri and Jenny wear Reebok tops and shorts.



Carlos Vizcarra

SPORT: Distance running;

his second Gay Games

STATS: 29; teacher; single;

native of El Salvador

ON THE GAMES: "I've always been sort of a solitary person to begin with, so [long-distance running] goes along with it. When you're running you're in your own little world. If you're having problems and you go out for two or three hours running, it just makes you forget about everything. Some people can't go the distance. I think I'm just programmed that way."

CARLOS WEARS A YMLA TOP FROM BEVERLY CENTER AND HIS OWN SUB4 SHORTS.

GAY GAMES VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA GAY GAMES VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



Jessica Seaton

SPORT: Swimming; her fourth Gay Games (she was team doctor in 1990 and won gold medals in 1994 and 1998)

STATS: Chiropractor; 49; partner of 12 years to another Gay Games athlete; native of New York City
ON THE GAMES: "I'm very excited about traveling to Sydney and competing in the fastest pool in the world. The Gay Games is one of the most moving experiences you can do."

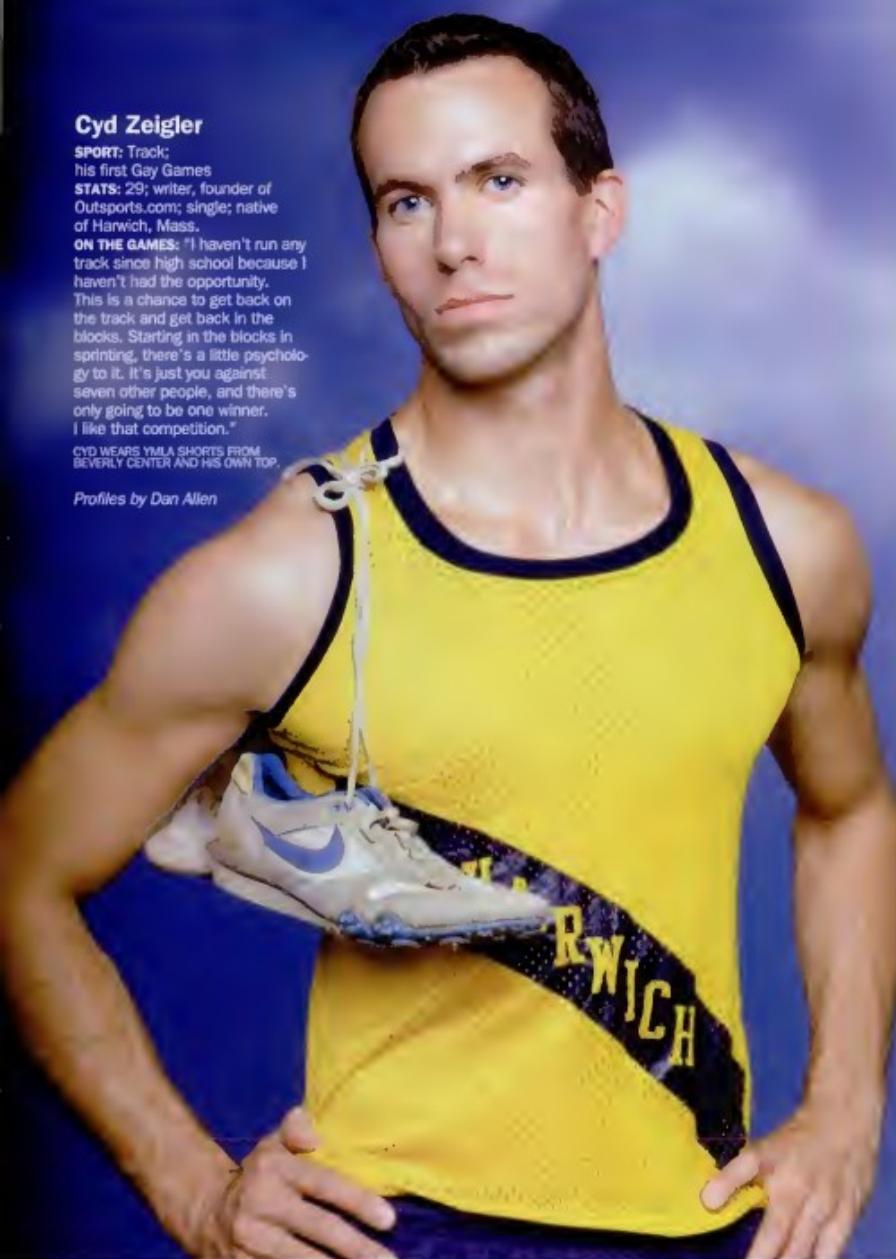
JESSICA WEARS HER OWN TYR SWIMSUIT.

Cyd Zeigler

SPORT: Track;
his first Gay Games
STATS: 29; writer, founder of
Outsports.com; single; native
of Harwich, Mass.
ON THE GAMES: "I haven't run any
track since high school because I
haven't had the opportunity.
This is a chance to get back on
the track and get back in the
blocks. Starting in the blocks in
sprinting, there's a little psycholo-
gy to it. It's just you against
seven other people, and there's
only going to be one winner.
I like that competition."

CYD WEARS YMCA SHORTS FROM
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Profiles by Dan Allen





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LIFE IN OZ

**How do gay rights in Australia measure up to those in the States?
Right well, thanks, mate. By Dan Allen**

Sydney is about to join the shortlist of aggressively gay-friendly cities that have hosted the Gay Games in its 20-year history. There's little question that the city, which throws the world-famous Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras every February, deserves its place among San Francisco, New York, Amsterdam, and Vancouver, Canada, the previous hosts. It's less clear, however, how the rest of Australia—a huge, rugged country where Great Britain once exiled its criminals—measures up when it comes to acceptance of gay people. Are Americans going to notice a difference in attitude when they go Down Under for the Gay Games?

Yes and no. Not surprisingly, Australia has a lot of similarities to the United States. A strong gay and lesbian presence in the largest cities has resulted in thriving political and cultural scenes, while in the rural areas, it's a little more difficult to find comfortably out gay men and lesbians. Beyond these similarities, however, Australians say their live-and-let-live attitude has resulted in a tangible difference in the way straight and gay people perceive

each other and, in turn, spawned more legal recognition for gay people than in the United States.

"On the whole, people are more laid-back here, and I think they're less hung up on appearances and external details," says Gillian Kendall, a U.S. expatriate who has lived with her Aussie partner in the Melbourne suburb of Carnegie since December. "Gays and lesbians here are usually much safer to be out and to be clear about being gays and lesbians, at work or on the street or in teaching or in government."

Kendall's relationship is a good example of the legal protections and recognition afforded to same-sex couples in Australia. Once the 41-year-old has lived with her girlfriend, 36-year-old Nicole Phillips, for 12 months, she is eligible to apply for a resident visa. Binational couples in the United States do not yet have that option.

"In the state of Victoria we have the same property rights and other like rights as married heterosexual couples," explains Leigh Johns, 32, president of Melbourne's popular annual GLBT Midsumma Festival, which takes place in January and February. "That level of ac-

ceptance and openness and tolerance is something that makes life here pretty pleasant." Johns, along with his partner of eight years and a lesbian couple, is a proud coparent of a 17-month-old daughter, Miella.

The bulk of Australian gay society, politics, and culture revolves around the country's two main urban centers: Sydney, a sprawling, gleaming metropolis of more than 4 million people, and Melbourne, an older, more European-style city with just under 3.5 million residents. Both on Australia's southeastern coast, the cities have a dynamic with each other not unlike that between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

"Sydney's gay scene tends to be en masse—big, really big—whereas Melbourne does things on a different sort of scale," says Sydney native Dominic O'Grady, editor and publisher of the Web-based *Gay Australia Guide*. "Mainstream gay life in Sydney is very much about taking your shirt off and partying for as long as you possibly can. They still love to party in Melbourne, but they also like to do their cafés and the restaurants. It's a bit more social, with smaller social groups there."

Australia Gay Games VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA Gay Games VI SYDNEY

But size isn't everything, according to Melbournian Johns. "Because the [gay] community is larger in Sydney, it's more disparate," he says. "It lends itself to having more separate organizations catering to different groups within the community. We are a smaller community, but we tend to band together a lot better."

Another difference U.S. visitors may notice is just how little the Australians wear when they go to the beach. While most American men currently favor billowing swim trunks, Australian guys seem to prefer formfitting briefs—much to the delight of Sean Ashby, a gay man whose company, AussieBum, makes many of those briefs.

The fact that two-year-old AussieBum is considered a national corporate Cinderella story speaks to Ashby's confidence in his product and his countrymen's unflappability about sexuality. He uses openly gay men for most of his company's modeling needs. "We don't go out there and say, 'Look, we're a gay-owned company, and here's our product, and you should support us,'" Ashby says. "We basically let the product speak for itself. With Australia being a very beach-oriented society, everyone [gay and straight] wears AussieBums."

And when they're not in swimwear, they might be in drag, says O'Grady. "Drag is huge, unbelievably huge," he says. "Drag is really satirical here and really political as well. It ties in with Australians' love of disrespecting authority and questioning social structures. Drag does that really effectively."

Even though Australia's drag scene has launched the mainstream careers of many a lovely "lady" (Sydney drag star Vanessa Wagner was a houseguest this season on the nationally televised *Celebrity Big Brother*), cross-dressing here isn't just for the boys. Melbourne in particular is home to a burgeoning drag king culture, with weekly performances by such favorites as Maurice Valentino and Jack Shit. "What distinguishes the kings from traditional drag is the distinct lack of lip-synching," says 31-year-old Louise Terry, a product developer for Tourism Victoria. "These girls—sorry, boys—sing and write their own material."

Terry, who lives in Melbourne with partner Grażyna Ziemiedewicz, 26, says

that on the whole, lesbian life in Australia "could be likened to lesbian life in many places around the world—generally less visible than the gay male scene and with a limited selection of distinctly dykey nightlife options available."

Not all of Australia's cities are quite so forward-thinking as the big two. Brett Humble, a 30-year-old corporate fitness trainer (and sometime AussieBum model) based in Sydney, says he is much less comfortable being out in his native Perth, 2,000 miles away from Sydney on the country's western coast. With more than 1 million inhabitants, Perth ranks fourth in terms of population, but its isolated location has historically made it a less hospitable place for gay people, he says.

"It's quite hard for a gay man to grow up in Perth," Humble says. "A lot of men from Perth actually leave there and end up either in Melbourne or in Sydney. ▶



Sydney's gay Mardi Gras (above) is a function of the city's gay-friendliness. On the other hand, "it's quite hard for a gay man to grow up in Perth," says personal trainer Brett Humble (top), now living in Sydney.



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GAY GAMES VI SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA 2002



Australia's "second city," Melbourne, with its impressive skyline and futuristic Queen's Bridge, is also home to a thriving gay and lesbian population.

just because it's more acceptable over this side of the world and, I think, eyes are more opened."

Acceptance of gays and lesbians varies across the vast continent. In northern Queensland, small coastal resort towns are popular gay destinations, while on the island state of Tasmania, gay male sex remained a crime until 1997, and cross-dressing only became legal in 2000.

Still, even in the more remote regions of Australia, there seems to be an increasing amount of acceptance, Johns says. "I was born and bred in [rural] Victoria and escaped to the city to come out and experience a gay life," says the native of Bendigo, population 77,000. "But it's interesting—I can now go back to my country town and there's a gay community there, which, when I left in 1987, would've been unthinkable."

In fact, he says, some towns have undergone complete transformations. "Daylesford [northwest of Melbourne]

WHAT IS THE GAY GAMES?

A primer on the event's history and a peek at what's in store in Sydney

Where did the games come from?

The Gay Games, founded by the late Olympic decathlete Tom Waddell, launched in San Francisco in 1982 and has taken place every four years since. According to the Federation of Gay Games, the purpose is "to foster and augment the self-respect of lesbians and gay men throughout the world and to engender respect and understanding from the nongay world."

Who runs the games?

The Federation of Gay Games chooses host cities from among those where local organizers offer the greatest promise of a successful event. Once designated, a local committee raises funds and organizes the actual events.

How will Gay Games VI compare with the 2000 Sydney Olympics?

The Gay Games is shorter, running No-

GAY GAMES VI

2002

SPORT & CULTURAL FESTIVAL SYDNEY



ember 2-9, but will have grand opening and closing ceremonies and more than 30 sports competitions, many of them in the Sydney's Olympic park. Traditional Olympic events are included—swimming, diving, triathlon, wrestling, track and field, figure skating, and others—as well as events the Olympics overlook, such as bowling, badminton, dancing, martial arts, table tennis, and physique. Apart from about 20 "core sports," the lineup changes depending on the host city: Amsterdam included chess in 1998; Sydney has a sailing event.

GAMES VI SYDNEY

was once a very small country town that didn't have very much to offer but has now simply been overtaken by gays and lesbians," he says. "It's the spa center of Victoria."

This progress is inherent to the Aussie psyche, O'Grady says. "There's a great tradition among Australians, which is: Each to his own, and let people get on with what they want to get on with," he says. "If you just get on with what you want to do, and you are what you are, people here respect you for that."

Kendall agrees. "People here tend not to be very stuck on themselves," she says. "People here don't care if you're gay or Greek or disabled or English. As long as you're not George W. Bush, you're pretty well accepted." ■

Allen is the former editor of Los Angeles-based zine Planet Homo.

 Find Dan Allen's travel diary for his trip across Australia at www.advocate.com

Are there tryouts?

No. The Federation of Gay Games welcomes all athletes "without regard to their sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political belief, physical ability, athletic/artistic ability, or HIV status."

What else is scheduled besides the games?

The accompanying lesbian and gay cultural festival—mandated by the federation—launches October 25 in Sydney, with both free and ticket events ranging from choral performances and opera to Bea Arthur's Australian stage debut. The concurrent Global Rights Conference program, unique to Sydney, will muster activists and others to discuss political and social topics, including race, health, workers' rights, queer studies, hate crimes, and bisexuality. Also, because up to 25,000 gays and lesbians are expected to visit the city, there likely will be numerous parties and special events not officially related to the Gay Games. ■

 For more information about U.S. athletes heading to Gay Games VI, go to www.advocate.com

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MONEY GAMES

The Sydney event follows two Gay Games that were financial disasters. In a post-9/11 world, Australian organizers' goal is just to break even

Producing a financially solvent Gay Games has long proved a monumental—if not impossible—task. The 1998 games in Amsterdam was a budgetary disaster, rescued from collapse after the opening ceremonies by a \$2.5 million bailout from the city council. Planners of Sydney's Gay Games VI have encountered the added obstacles of a tough global economy and a jittery travel market. Large corporate sponsorship has been light, and just before the deadline, athlete registration numbers are about 3,000 short of the projected 14,000. Still, Peter Bailey, co-chair of the Sydney Gay Games board, remains confident that this installment of the games will end in the black.

What lessons did the Sydney organizers try to learn from past games? It's been difficult to learn from the past, because the unfortunate circumstances of Amsterdam meant that we didn't really get a lot of historical information passed across. There's quite an obligation for us at this time—under our licensing agreement to the [Gay Games] Federation—to make sure that we produce a fairly quantitative report on what we did, the way we staged it, and some of the key learning so that Montreal will have a better transition plan.

In addition to up to 14,000 sports competitors, what spectator attendance do you expect for the games? We've anticipated some 25,000 additional visitors to Sydney. These will be a combination of partners, family, and friends of participants and people who just want to be in Sydney to attend the events and join in the euphoria of Sydney and Gay Games. We have worked with the [state] agency Tourism New South Wales to calculate that some AU\$100 million in additional tourist income will be generated during the games and the week leading up to and afterward.



Sydney Gay Games board cochair Bailey: "It's going to be an outrageous success here."

How do you hope to produce a financially successful Gay Games, given that so many have failed in the past?

If you measure success purely on breakeven, it's going to be an outrageous success here, because that's what we're striving for. The budget is pivotal: We're putting on umbrella events that we don't have to take the [financial] risk in—extending the cultural program in particular and bringing in a conference program. We've absolutely tried to minimize the risk: We can identify how much [each] sport costs us so we know how much we've got to cover to get a reasonable sponsorship out of a corporate or community group. We've spent a lot of time understanding our costs.

You've announced that if the final registration numbers fall short of projections, tough budget cuts may go into effect. How will these cuts affect the games themselves? We're still going to get 12,000 or 13,000 or 14,000 athletes. That's bigger than the number of athletes who came to the Sydney Olympics. [Whatever the final total] we've always said that the sports

would be maintained at the level that we've always committed to. Swimming is still going to be at the Sydney Aquatic Centre, which is exactly where the 2000 Olympics were staged, and track and field is still out there as well as hockey and tennis. About 40% of the athletes will participate at Sydney Olympic Park. But there are some other less strong events in terms of registration—like net ball and some of our [soccer] events—and they're the types of budget [cutting] opportunities that we've got: to see what venues we could move those to without necessarily changing the flavor of the involvement.

The media in Australia have often focused on the lack of cash support from the government.

When this happens we endeavor to provide them with some of the details of the noncash budget-relieving assistance we get, which we're enormously appreciative of. They've provided us with our office accommodations, some 30 staff, discounts at a number of venues [including the Sydney Olympic Park], and discounts on participants' travel passes during the games.

Why do you think it's been so difficult to obtain large corporate sponsorships for the Gay Games?

I think it's a combination. It's an accident of timing, in some respects. We had September 11, and people got really nervous about traveling. A lot of it's just the Australian market; a lot of it's just the history of the Gay Games and the last two events not having broken even—sponsors are somewhat skeptical. We'll soon be making announcements about some sponsors that we've brought on [in recent weeks]. The product is now very tangible. It's only a couple of months away. The excitement's growing. The word is out there, and there's a level of confidence building.—Dan Allen



Julian was baffled when I sat down at the computer with my dinner jacket on - but when I started to win...!

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Breaking the taboo



So there I was in London, thumbing through the June issue of *Gay Times*, the closest thing the United Kingdom has to *The Advocate*, when I started on page 29 by Luke Evans. Three-dimensionally handsome, the 23-year-old actor costars in Boy George's musical *Taboo*, the hit West End show chronicling

George's rise and fall and rise again. It isn't just the photograph—it's what he says that leaves me slack-jawed: "People come up to me in pubs, gay pubs mind you, and can't believe that I'm gay," he says. *What did he just say?* I'm thinking. *Did this young actor in his first major role really announce that he's gay? Doesn't he have handlers or agents who know what's best for him?*

Off I went to see the show—and found Luke to be a fine actor, a terrific singer, and completely at home playing the straight guy who's the object of the Boy George character's affections. So I decided I'd better talk to this young man—before Luke Evans becomes a household name here in the States and changes his mind!

Has *Taboo* met your expectations for your career?

Definitely. I hadn't really done a lot before *Taboo*. I graduated from drama college 2½ years ago, played a small part in a musical called *La Cava* in the year 2000, then I did 15 episodes of a soap. I played their first baddie in a new soap on telly. And I didn't do anything for eight months, so this is my big break.

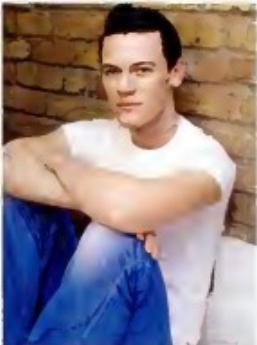
Where did you grow up?

I come from south Wales. A place called Aberbargoed.

A small town?

Oh, very small, yeah, too small for me and my ego! [Laughs] I had a very difficult upbringing. I was brought up as

a Jehovah's Witness. And I'm the only child. And my mom and dad still are Jehovah's Witnesses, so I was never able to sort of naturally come out. It would have been very difficult any-



Actor Luke Evans on being out: "If people don't like it, then I don't want their jobs."

way, even if my parents weren't Witnesses, to come out in the village that I was brought up in. [But] they both know now and they're both fantastic and they love *Taboo*. My mom and dad said, "You know, you're our boy and no matter how much we love our religion and our God, we're sure he's going to understand that we can never turn our backs on you."

How did you decide you're going to be open about your sexuality? Well, it was something I'd spoken to a

lot of people about, including my boyfriend at the time—we've broken up now—but at the time when I just got *Taboo*, I knew that even though my part was a straight character everybody knew me as a gay man, and in my life in London I never tried to hide it.... I knew I was going to have to do interviews with gay magazines; I knew this was going to happen. So I thought, *Well, I'm going to have to be open. It's who I am. And if people don't like it, then I don't want their jobs.* I've never been a very good liar, which is another thing...

Aren't actors all good liars?

Well, it's not nice. Look at George Michael, let's say. I mean, he hid it for so many years, and then he gets found out in a really awful way.... You know, you start a slippery slope downward, and I didn't want to start that at 22. If that means I'm going to be a poor man at 60, then at least I've lived a happy, open, gay life and not had to hide it from anybody.

I've had letters from people who have read my articles and said, "I'm a guy, I'm 18, and I've not come out to my mom and dad yet, but it was so nice to hear your story, and you know, I wish your article would have been longer, because you gave me hope for the future." As far as I'm concerned it's not a big issue. You come out, that's it, the end.

Do you think it might be different in the U.K. than in America?

Well, it depends how big you are. It's not a big issue, and it's never going to be a big issue for me; whether I'm successful or if I weren't successful, at least I'll never have that skeleton in the closet they can rattle out. You know what I mean? ■

For more of this conversation with Luke Evans, go to www.advocate.com.

**Did this young actor, in his first major role, really announce that he's gay?
Doesn't he have handlers or agents who know what's best for him?**



film

Capturing China's gay heart

Hong Kong director Stanley Kwan talks about *Lan Yu*, his lyrical gay love story set and filmed in supposedly repressive China **By B. Ruby Rich**

The reason that I announced my sexuality was that I felt that as a creator at that stage, it would be better for me if I became honest with the public rather than trying to hide. When you're young you might as well have a good time and not think too much. But when you are older you want to have a commitment to things, and the only way to do that is to be yourself, to come out, rather than pretend."

So says director Stanley Kwan, whose new gay love story, *Lan Yu*, comes to American audiences this summer. When Kwan shocked Hong Kong by coming out, he was already established as one of the city's best filmmakers, esteemed for his finely tuned aesthetics and perfectly realized tragic heroines. Asked to do a documentary for the British Film Institute's

Kwan manages to create an emotional resonance that doesn't so much transcend the story as amplify it to encompass everyone's sense of hope and loss.

Century of Cinema series, Kwan boldly turned the exercise into *Yin and Yang: Gender in Chinese Cinema*, an open meditation on his own gay identity as traced through Hong Kong, Taiwanese, and Chinese movies. And lest there be any doubt how personal this all was, Kwan's mother even appears on-screen, proudly chatting with her son about the films she saw while he was still in the womb.

Kwan's new film, *Lan Yu*, his first gay narrative, is a love story between a closeted middle-aged businessman and the poor student he hires for sex. Kwan manages to create an emotional resonance that doesn't so much transcend the story as amplify it to encompass everyone's sense of hope and loss. "Something about the story really touched me," admits Kwan. "I reviewed it many times, and it made me want to talk to my boyfriend of 10 years, William. And because it made me want to talk to him, all of a sudden I became passionate about the story and committed to do it."

Lan Yu has its source in *Beijing Story*, a novel that was written anonymously by a Chinese woman in memory of her good friend, whose life and great love it recounts. It circulated in installments on the Internet in China and was so popular with China's gay subcultures that the novel's characters became part of chat-room exchanges. The phenomenon came to the attention of Zhang Yongning, a London-based actor and producer. Zhang laid siege to Kwan, who finally agreed to work with him and shoot the film in Beijing.

Clearly, it's a misconception to think that such a film could never be made there. It can—at least if the fi-

nancing comes from Hong Kong. "Hundreds of good actors came for the audition," says Kwan, "without worrying about the film's subject or my sexuality—just because they believed that a good director plus a good story makes a good film. People tried their hardest to be cast. In Hong Kong actors would have been worried about their image if they took a gay part. In China nobody cared about that, only about its being a good part."

Kwan says the experience has changed him. "I used to always say that Hong Kong was the most civilized and open-minded territory in all of China, but actually it's the most conservative," he points out. "People say, 'Oh, Stanley, you're so brave!' But what do they say behind my back?"

His producer agrees: "In Hong Kong, now that he's out, colleagues identify him as a gay director. But in China people see him as a film director, without regard to his sexuality."

While the media in Hong Kong and Taiwan have been printing reports of a China Film Bureau crackdown on actors who took part in making *Lan Yu*, Kwan wants to set the record straight. The bureau took no action other than to remind *Lan Yu*'s two male leads to work in the future with Hong Kong filmmakers who have a license to film in China. In fact, Kwan wants to go back, and so does his Hong Kong financier. "I've formed a company with one of the *Lan Yu* producers," Kwan says. "It's called Purple Light and will produce young filmmakers in China."

In the meantime he's taking meetings in Los Angeles. ■

Rich is international programmer of the 2002 Toronto Film Festival.

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Possession recession

The lesbian subplot in this lush literary romance feels all too familiar, even if it's new territory for director Neil LaBute **By Jan Stuart**



Christabel LaMotte (Jennifer Ehle) reads a note from her "platonic" new man friend—as her longtime love (Lenore Headley) frets.

Possession ■ Written by Neil LaBute, David Henry Hwang, and Laura Jones ■ Directed by Neil LaBute ■ Starring Gwyneth Paltrow, Aaron Eckhart, Jeremy Northam, and Jennifer Ehle ■ USA Films

If you saw *Possession* minus its credit sequence, the last person you might guess as its director would be Neil LaBute. With its verdant English countryside vistas and candlelit Victorian passions, it seems worlds away from the cold "men are from malls, women are Venus flytraps" combativeness of *Your Friends & Neighbors* and *In the Company of Men*. As matches made in celestial heaven, this one would seem to

be right up there with John Huston and *Annie*.

Possession is better than *Annie*, a concession that will probably not send the flacks at USA Films leaping for their quote ads. On closer inspection, there are significant points of alignment between the caustic eloquence of LaBute and the prickly literary societies of A.S. Byatt, whose 555-page novel inspired this problematically telescoped film version.

LaBute probably emphasizes with Byatt's 19th-century poet Randolph Henry Ash (Jeremy Northam), a tortured fool for love who is able to soft-soap intelligent women despite the "soft-core misogyny" of his poetry. And

if Randolph were somehow spirited into the 21st century like Hugh Jackman in *Kate & Leopold*, he could find a sympathetic ear in Roland Michell (Aaron Eckhart), a scholar of Victorian poetry who is engaged in a do-or-die mission to unearth Randolph's past.

Recalling the contrasting universes of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Byatt's time-tripping story stalks the gradually intersecting trajectories and parallel romances of the researcher and his subject. Roland (changed to an American from the novel's working-class Brit) enlists the aid of starchy English academic Maud Bailey (Gwyneth Paltrow, her hair locked in a chastity-belt bun) when he uncovers a

love letter from Randolph to Bailey's great-great-aunt, the feminist poet Christabel LaMotte (the terminally beaufitiful Jennifer Ehle).

The discovery of the illicit romance overturns the conventional scholarship on the two poets: Roland was supposedly devoted to his frigid wife and Christabel was renowned for her loving domestic nest with a painter named Blanche Glover (the wonderful Lena Headley, whose firecracker sensuality is wasted here). Seven decades after Lillian Hellman's play *The Children's Hour* validated and annihilated lesbian desire in the same breath, *Possession* returns gay women to the back of the bus, relegating Blanche to the thankless role of the long-suffering, suicidal doormat.

Never having finished the book, I don't know whether to protest Byatt's Booker Prize or question the gender-busting credentials of LaButte and cowriters David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*) and Laura Jones (*The Portrait of a Lady*). But *Possession* is just another vicarious thrill for gay audiences. While Blanche is busy sewing rocks into her skirt for a Virginia Woolf swim, Randolph and Christabel are making whoopee in fairy-tale fishing villages. Meanwhile, back in the 21st century, the self-abnegating Maud and Roland are engaged in a tentative mating dance. Down comes Paltrow's hair, off comes Eckhart's shirt.

The stars have genuine heat together. Paltrow's glacial, gorgeous Maud is a convincing yin to the testosterone-dripping yang of Eckhart's Roland, whose halting sincerity and lackadaisical "brush and flush" philosophy of grooming perfectly embodies a certain species of caveman intellectual. They share some citrusy exchanges that would be perfectly at home in the company of Labute's other men and women.

Possession is finally too truncated for material that wants to be a sinuous six-hour miniseries. The attempt at streamlining renders it curiously plodding and occasionally silly: *Nancy Drew Gets Her Ph.D.* Why am I not surprised that Nancy would grow up to have serious relationship issues? ■

Stuart is film critic and senior news writer at Newsday.



video review

Spy camp

The outrageously silly *Modesty Blaise* finally makes it to home video

By David Ehrenstein

Modesty Blaise ■ Directed by Joseph Losey ■ Starring Monica Vitti, Terence Stamp, and Dirk Bogarde ■ 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

With the Austin Powers series making '60s-era spy spoofs chic again, it was only a matter of time before some smart (and very likely gay) cookie over at 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment realized it was high time that *Modesty Blaise* be brought out on DVD. For while Austin, Dr. Evil, and Mini Me are fun, they can't compare with Monica Vitti, Terence Stamp, and (most especially) Dirk Bogarde in Joseph Losey's film version of Peter O'Donnell's comic strip about super-thief-turned-superspy Modesty, originally released in 1966—when Mike Myers was 3 years old.

Pushing aside the Antonioni ennui that made her famous, Vitti is utterly delicious as Modesty, slinking through

more costume and wig changes than Norma Shearer had in *Marie Antoinette*. And Stamp, fresh off the gloom of *The Collector*, has many a wig flipped as well as her sidekick, Willie Garvin. But the main attraction is Dirk Bogarde as the self-proclaimed "villain of the piece," master criminal Gabriel. Acting on-screen in a manner that he'd previously only done offscreen, Bogarde gives the gayest performance in the history of the cinema up to that point. It's perfectly complemented by Rosella Falk (of 8% fame) as his aide-de-camp—and I do mean camp—Mrs. Fothergill, a bisexual psychopath who loves strangling people between her thighs and who suggests Kay Thompson on LSD.

In fact, the whole film—redolent with pop- and op-art imagery—suggests nothing less than an Arthur Freed musical on acid. That the gay characters are the bad guys is of little ideological consequence, in that Modesty and Willie, while nominally heterosexual, are more chaste than Will and Grace. Making the gay subtext even more pronounced is Tina Aumont, none other than the daughter of all-time camp goddess Maria Montez. (And yes, that's Michael Chow, later famed restaurateur "Mr. Chow," serving Vitti breakfast in the opening scene.) All told, *Modesty Blaise* is the gayest film ever made that doesn't actually feature same-sex action. ■

Ehrenstein is the author of Open Secret: Gay Hollywood 1928–1998.

theater

The tough cookie we love

Now on Broadway, *The Sopranos'* Edie Falco takes the Fifth about her gay best friend and her lesbian fans **By Drew Limsky**

To hear Edie Falco tell it, her rapid *Sopranos*-fueled rise to fame has been just a bit dizzying. When Meryl Streep casually complimented her work in a face-to-face encounter, Falco recalls, "I almost passed out. I was knock-kneed. I didn't think that *The Sopranos* was going to make it into that conversation." But she has no plans to mop up on the "Italian wives and mother roles" she's routinely offered. Instead, she's heading back to her old turf, the theater—with a star turn on Broadway opposite Stanley Tucci in *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, the hardscrabble hetero-love story by out playwright Terrence McNally. The limited run wraps up in late December, just in time for Falco to return to playing Mafia wife Carmela for *The Sopranos'* next season.

McNally is not Falco's only gay admirer: For years one of her best buds has been filmmaker Eric Mendelsohn. "Edie and I went to the same college, State University of New York, Purchase," writes her longtime friend in a charming E-mail interview. "She did some two-person play and I went to see it, and I remember pointing to the stage and saying 'Her! That one there! That's the most talented person in this entire school.' Truth be told, I was pointing at the other actress, who, as it turns out, never really amounted to much. Edie was pretty good, too, though."

Mendelsohn would later cast Falco as a cluelessly optimistic wanna-be actor in his 1999 Sundance prize-winner, *Judy Berlin*. Asked if the film's treatment of her character and that of its leading man was in any way based on his real-life friendship with Falco, Mendelsohn demurs: "Not in the least. We're actually more like a couple of 70-year-old Jewish



Could *The Sopranos'* Carmela ever have a lesbian affair? Edie Falco's not telling.

women...we're always asking about the other's bowels. At night I go to her house and we watch *Matlock* and sip Hoffman's cream soda."

The two are so close that a cheesy tabloid once made the gaffe of "exposing" Mendelsohn as Falco's secret love, thanks to their weekly coffee-shop breakfasts together. How did Mendelsohn feel about being Falco's tabloid squeeze? "I thought it was great," he responds. "I laughed hysterically for about two days and then called my lawyer."

Meanwhile, on the phone with *The Advocate*, Falco is taking the Fifth on her friendship with Mendelsohn, loyally refusing to confirm or deny his sexual identity. Maybe it's the fact that the line is tapped, but while she's perfectly pleasant, Falco seems determined to

keep the conversation strictly impersonal—until she's told of her loyal lesbian fan base. "Oh, my goodness," she exclaims. "I had no idea."

Indeed, her lesbian fans felt let down by one *Sopranos* episode in which a lesbian tennis instructor ignored Carmela to make a play for her in-law-to-be Adriana (Drea de Matteo). Falco emits a laugh of surprise: "It's very flattering."

She indulges one gay-tinted *Sopranos* speculation: Could Carmela ever find herself in the arms of another woman? "There's as much a possibility of that as anything else on that show," Falco says, inscrutable to the last. ■

Additional reporting by Anne Stockwell. Limsky is a New York-based freelance writer.

"I could have died then and it would have been the happiest day of my life. I had grown up, and even if I hadn't married a woman, I was, at least, kissing one."

—Karen X. Tschitsky, from *Testimonies*

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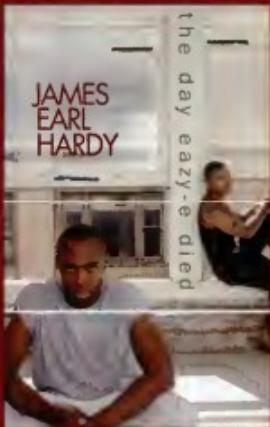
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music review

The big queer '80s

A new boxed set brings back memories of gender-bending pop stars and postdisco fabulosity **By Larry Flick**

Like, Omigod! The '80s Pop Culture Box (*Totally*) ■ Various artists ■ Rhino Records

For a moment, the transition of the '70s into the '80s sounded the death knell of gay sensibilities in mainstream popular music. The 1979 declaration of disco's death—a move that die-hard aficionados of the genre still bitterly refer to as a bloodcurdling murder—ushered in a brief period that shuttled queer music back into the underground. Instead of the sexually carefree vibe of disco, radio and pop culture were quickly saturated by the harsh macho swagger of punk and the sometimes cartoonish pogo-bounce of New Wave, two movements that were decidedly hetero in demeanor at first.

But it wasn't long before queer flavor was once again permeating the

mainstream—albeit in a far less decadent, occasionally more clownish manner than during the '70s. And while it wasn't likely Rhino's intention to trace the emergence of gay sensibilities in pop music during the '80s, the label's mammoth, seven-CD boxed retrospective *Like, Omigod! The '80s Pop Culture Box (Totally)* offers an amusing, sometimes revelatory peek into how we came back into mainstream prominence amid a sea of punks, New Wavers, hair-metal poseurs, and adult-pop drags. The set does little to affirm the artistic merit of the Reagan decade, but it provides a firm reminder that the '80s were a damn sight more fun than the new millennium has been so far.

The beauty of this collection is that it doesn't strive to be intensely cool, nor to function from any one point of view—instead, it's a simple reflection of what the masses were plunking

down their bucks for throughout the decade. It's fascinating to see goofy cuts like "Keep on Loving You" by REO Speedwagon and Eddie Rabbitt's "I Love a Rainy Night" eventually giving way to Queen's groin-tugging "Another One Bites the Dust" and Soft Cell's dark yet wildly erotic "Tainted Love." Not only did both of the latter cuts resurrect the notion of primal, club-spiced rhythms as fodder for pop success, they were both by bands fronted by men with undeniably queer images: Soft Cell's Marc Almond was out during the act's heyday, though Queen singer Freddie Mercury's homosexuality remained an open secret until after his AIDS-related passing in 1991.

Even more fascinating is how the impact of the British-born New Romantic and synth-pop movements seeped into pop consciousness with a slew of hetero and gay acts that not only toyed





Marc Almond



Duran Duran

with the once-reviled musical ethics of disco (ABC's "The Look of Love" and "Obsession" by Animotion) but also employed elements of drag. As bands like Duran Duran, Dead or Alive, and Eurythmics became the new guard, mainstream pop audiences became increasingly accepting of nontraditional, often queer sexual images. This acceptance spilled beyond boundary-pushers like Culture Club's Boy George to rockers Twisted Sister, who playfully merged a hypermasculine stomp with makeup and lingerie-spiked clothing. By the end of the '80s, the lines had blurred and a sizable portion of pop music had once again become a free-for-all of sexual excess and proud flamboyance. Without trying, *Like, Omigod!* outlines this in vividly loving detail.

To bad the '90s and grunge had to come along and spoil the fun. ■

Flick is senior talent editor at Billboard.

Forever Amber

Her gay fans may dig her beats, says dance music queen Amber, but they also identify with her struggles

Amber loves to be surrounded by her "boys," standing center stage in a crowded gay club. "Sometimes, there is no more safer or emotionally supportive a place in the world to be," she says. "It's like having a blanket of love wrapped around you."

And she insists that her affection is rooted far deeper than the standard hetero diva blowing superficial kisses to her gay disciples. "We share a kinship, a bond that comes from understanding and enduring the struggles of life," she notes, drawing a deep breath and glancing pensively out the window of her New Jersey home. "It's too easy to just say, 'I love my gay fans, and they love it when I sing dance songs about sex.' There's a mutual response between us. It cuts deeper than music."

Yet music is the tie that binds the Dutch singer and the gay men who have continually snapped up her disco-laced odes to sex and love since her 1996 breakthrough, "This Is Your Night," and through a growing catalog of infectious rhythm-rooted nuggets that includes "One More Night" and "Sexual (Li Da Di)." As she puts the finishing touches on her third studio album, *Naked* (Tommy Boy), Amber strives to make music that continues to build a mainstream pop following while also serving the needs of her queer audience. "And they require more than the bump-dab-bump crap than most people believe," she says, her grin building to a chuckle. "God help you if you come to the table with crap. They will let you know how tired you are. And ooh, child, that is not pretty."

As her laughter subsides, Amber further ponders her bond with gay clubsters. It goes far beyond the escapism of the dance floor, she explains. "It's about the discrimination that we've both had to endure. Being a woman in the music



business can be so difficult. You have to work twice as hard to be heard and taken seriously. It's been an uphill battle for me at times; that can make you bitter and angry if you're not careful. When I walk out onto a stage, I carry all of my experiences and struggles with me. And if you've lived through your own struggles, then you see through the smile and you see the truth. That's what I share with the guys in my audience. We see each other for who we really are. That's a beautiful thing."

The bond is not exclusively dark and serious, though. Amber may be smarter than your average dance siren, but *Naked* also shows her in a decidedly playful mood, as evidenced by vibrant, hands-in-the-air anthems like "The Need to Be Naked" and "Sex & the City." How does she reconcile belting such libidinous fare for an audience that doesn't view her as an object of sexual desire?

"I think that, for some of my gay male fans, I'm the one woman they would choose to be with," she says with tongue placed firmly in cheek. "I see how they look at me onstage. They appreciate this body, baby. They may go home with the hot man they meet at the bar, but I think I might be flashing in their minds...at least once in a while." —Larry Flick

music

A little help from his friends

Three decades after forming the Mumps with Lance Loud, Kristian Hoffman releases a CD of duets with the likes of Rufus Wainwright and Paul Reubens **By Steve Gdula**

It's 9 o'clock in the morning in Los Angeles the day after the release party for Kristian Hoffman's latest CD, a series of duets titled *&*, and the musician is just beginning to allow himself to revel in the previous night's success. "I was in my 'poor me' mode. I thought, *No one's gonna come*," he says, affecting a whine. "And of course, [the show] was packed!"

For anyone familiar with Hoffman's reputation, the show's success is no surprise. As & collaborator and friend Rufus Wainwright says, "Everyone knows Kristian. He's generous, honest, [and] one of the hardest-working musicians in L.A." Another & partner, Ann Magnuson, dubs Hoffman "Oscar Wilde-witty" before quipping, "He's played Barry Manilow to my Bette Midler." Paul "Pee-wee Herman" Reubens, yet another & collaborator, calls Hoffman "a great writer and musician."

Even with endorsements like these, Hoffman isn't too quick to believe the hype. "It's a holdover from the struggle," he says. "You labor on your art project and you're hoping someone will pay attention, and when they finally do, it's hard to believe it. But the stars seem to be aligning, and things are pretty good



right now." The CD's songs, all penned by Hoffman (with the exception of "I Can't Remember My Dreams," which he co-wrote with Lydia Lunch) showcase his boundaryless range as a writer, from the Nick Lowe-style pop

of "Anybody but You" to the somber, stripped-down musings on the Matthew Shepard ode "Scarecrow" to the campy New Wave cabaret of "Series of You's."

A quick overview of Hoffman's life suggests that the stars have always aligned for him. He jokingly calls himself "the Zelig of rock and roll," and he has, like the fictional Woody Allen character, found himself on the scene when some of the most pivotal moments in glam, punk, and New Wave music history were unfolding. In the early '70s he hung out with the likes of Lou Reed and Alice Cooper at Max's Kansas City. He rubbed elbows with David Bowie and Bryan Ferry at Club 82. At CBGB he befriended Deborah Harry and other underground sensations such as Talking Heads before they became superstars. And in the '80s he hung out with New York icons-in-the-making like artists Kenny Scharf and Keith Haring.

Currently, Hoffman plays in the touring band of Dave Davies, of Kinks fame.

But it's when he talks about his first band, the Mumps, in which he played with Lance Loud, that Hoffman seems the most proud. Hoffman's exploits as a Santa Barbara, Calif., teenager were documented in the PBS reality series *An American Family*, which starred his high school pal Loud. The friends' great escape to New York and their attempts to form a band were immortalized in the television series. The Mumps went on to become underground legends in the clubs of New York.

Looking back on his wild ride, Hoffman wonders about the importance he places on those memories. "Am I cheapening my perspective of now by waxing nostalgic about this era?" he asks. "But I have to think that, realistically, it was pretty incredible."

Hoffman's life right now is "pretty incredible" too. He shares his Los Angeles home with his partner, playwright Justin Tanner (*Pot Mom, Happytime Xmas*), and early reviews of & are positive.

"Everything to me, always happens by mistake," he says, deflecting praise for his seeming good fortune. "Except for the fact that I keep persevering. If you stop working, it's never going to happen." ■

Gdula is a freelance writer who has also written for The Washington Post.

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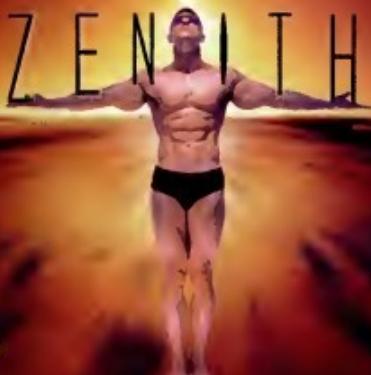


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P-town's ups and dunes

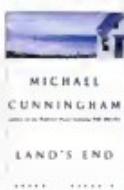
Is Provincetown a peaceful gay haven or a once-charmed village looted by gay tourists? As two new books suggest, it all depends on whom you ask By David Bahr



Ptown: Art, Sex, and Money on the Outer Cape ■ Peter Manso
■ Scribner ■ \$25

Land's End: A Walk in Provincetown ■ Michael Cunningham ■ Crown Journeys
■ \$16

Twelve years ago I took a boat from Boston on my first trip to Provincetown. Approaching the former fishing village, founded in the 18th century on a sandbar at the end of Massachusetts's Cape Cod, I chuckled in awe at the crown of white steeples, the rustic wharves, and the looming stone watchtower on the horizon. On land, I en-



countered more drag queens, lesbians, heterosexual cross-dressers, gay Republicans, and sexual fluidity in a single week than I had in my entire life. I have returned every year since, lately spending half the summer snared by the rugged landscape and laissez-faire lifestyle.

Two new books, one by a sensationalistic straight writer, the other by a Pulitzer Prize-winning gay novelist, offer two distinct, and distinctly engrossing, views of the quixotic New England town. The more controversial—residents of Provincetown were abuzz about it months before publication—is *Ptown: Art, Sex, and Money on the Outer Cape* by Peter Manso. The book lives

up to its subtitle—if not in substance, then at least in the gay-obsessed author's relentless preoccupations. Here's the kind of information he finds noteworthy: "The men who come to Ptown for sex—and that's most of them—have their own vocabulary: Rice Queen: anyone attracted only to Asians...Chocolate Queen: those who like only blacks...Potato Queen: those who only like whites."

The book is full of curiously derived facts. Manso writes about the town's infamous public sex spot: "Occasionally, local straight men visit the Dick Dock to receive a competent blow job, but if they see the person who serviced them the next day on the street, they do not acknowledge him."

Ultimately, one is left to imagine Manso's method of obtaining data, since this 307-page book contains only 27 footnotes. The whole project is so

haphazardly researched and edited that Manso even describes one of gay Provincetown's drugs of choice as "GHB." (Frankly, I have no idea how popular GHB is; I am that apparently rare gay man who goes to Provincetown to read by the water and ride the bike trails.)

The impression is not so much homophobic as clueless. Although Manso's survey of Provincetown's century-old art scene is perfunctory, he does, toward the book's end, convincingly project a bleak cultural future for a town whose artist colony and Portuguese fishing community have been gradually replaced by rich vacationing lesbians and gays. But by then Manso has packaged so much idiocy as insight that any faith in his judgment is permanently shipwrecked.

In *Land's End: A Walk in Provincetown*, Michael Cunningham presents no grand opinions disguised as fact—just a lot of grand opinions. "With this book I hope to offer neither more nor less of my own particular devotion," he writes. Cunningham alternates between the personal (such as his disappointing first summer 20 years ago as a writing fellow at the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center) and the historical (the beaching of more than 600 whales during the mid 1800s; playwright Eugene O'Neill's fruitful stay). He also includes prose and verse from such present and former residents as Norman Mailer, Mark Doty, and Denis Johnson.

An assured and engaging ham, Cunningham is the perfect guide, deftly capturing Provincetown's Dionysian delights and Apollonian beauty with wit, whimsy, and lyricism. For him, sex in the dunes is "innocently bacchanalian—more creaturely than lewd." And when he writes of the "gulls gliding overhead, white as bone china, searching from their high silence for whatever they might be able to eat down there among the dunes and marshes, the black rooftops, the little lights tossing on the water as the tides move out or in," I am back on the boat from Boston, reliving my first visit, memory and myth resonant still. ■

Bahr has written for The New York Times, The New York Times Book Review, and Poets & Writers.

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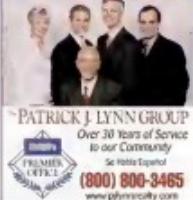
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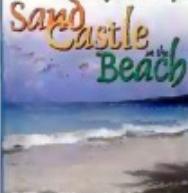
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Come out, father



Gay men are nasty, filthy child molesters, right?

Well, actually, way, way wrong. But that's the conclusion a lot of people are drawing from the ongoing scandal in the Roman Catholic Church.

And sadly, among those contributing to the revival of that tired old myth are decent, honorable gay Catholic priests

themselves, who don't molest anybody but who, by their frightened silence and refusal to stand up for themselves, are inadvertently allowing the smear to go unchallenged.

The idea that gay men molest boys was one of the big lies of homophobia for decades. It was in relation to gay men what the old blood libel was in relation to Jews: a dirty, dishonest fiction, but one with undeniable power to rile up fear and loathing.

Gay liberationists spent years exposing and defeating that lie, and by the late 1990s we had pretty much succeeded. Witness the fact that when the Boy Scouts of America went to court to defend its policy of excluding gays, it trotted out every conceivable argument and excuse—except the argument that gay scouts might molest boys. That argument was so dead, even the BSA didn't dare dredge it up.

Then along came the Catholic Church and its sexual abuse scandal, in which most of the abuse appears to involve male priests molesting young male parishioners. Suddenly, the age-old libel seemed to have a new lease on life. And what did the Catholic Church do? Did it respond by admitting that it had gravely sinned by allowing abuse of every kind—heterosexual, homosexual, and pedophilic—to run rampant for decades while shifting the abusers to new posts

where they could abuse again?

It did not. Senior church spokesmen here and in Rome proclaimed that gay priests were the problem and that the solution was to sweep



them out of the priesthood. The clear implication being that—you guessed it—gay men are nasty, filthy child abusers, and the way to get rid of abuse is to get rid of gays.

So just when we thought we had finally buried perhaps the worst libel ever to be flung our way, it has come roaring back to life, resurrected by the spinmeisters of Rome. True, we have fought back by pointing to long-established studies demolishing the idea that gays molest more than straights, and maybe we've made some progress. But the most eloquent set of voices we need in this debate is the one we're not hearing—

the voices of gay priests themselves. Estimated at 15% to 50% of the American priesthood, these are the guys who minister to the sick and poor, say the midnight masses, toil in the parishes nobody else wants, and have never molested anybody.

Gay priests are as horrified by the scandal as any element of society. More horrified, probably. Yet, so far, anyway, they are silent—terrified that if they speak out and say, "Yes, I'm a gay priest," and "No, I don't molest children," and "Yes, I'm disgusted by the scandal and want the abuse to end," they'll be drummed out of the church and lose their life's vocation. And they might be right.

The problem is that by saying nothing, by refusing to take the risk of coming out and bearing witness to the reality of their lives, they are adding to the impression that they are all somehow shameful and guilty, denying us the witnesses we need and powerfully undermining both their own cause and the cause of gay liberation.

For decades gay men and lesbians have taken enormous risks at enormous personal cost in order to right the ancient wrongs of homophobia. From the teenager who comes out and risks homelessness to the marine who comes out and risks court-martial, gay people have bravely borne witness, have suffered great losses, and in so doing have changed the world. For priests, whose calling is one of sacrifice, self-negation, and bearing witness, to refuse to do the same is a blot on their mission.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to God." In the present climate that's not a platitude. It's a necessity. ■

Gay priests are horrified by the sex abuse scandal. Yet, so far, anyway, they are silent—terrified that if they speak out, they'll lose their life's vocation.



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